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JUNE/JULY 2000
NUMBER 104

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RICHARD JOHN NEUHAUS
THE PUBLIC SQUARE
A Continuing Survey of Religion and Public Life

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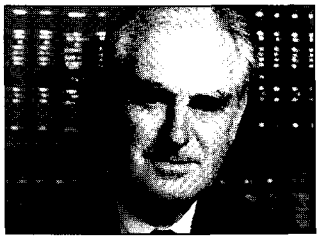

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Mormons and (Other?) Christians

Richard John Neuhaus' essay "Is Mormonism Christian?" (March) is disappointing. As a FIRST THINGS reader for years and a recent subscriber, I have come to expect a higher standard than is exhibited in several aspects of this article.

With regard to the question posed by the title, the essay is superficial, offering only a selective answer. Thus, a judgment is rendered based on *historical* factors, but not on *theological* issues—or, rather, a distorted and limited view of Mormon doctrine is judged against "ecumenical councils" (instead of the Bible). Of course, Mormonism is not, from either its own perspective or that of a Catholic priest, a continuous part of historical Christianity in either creedal or institutional dimensions. But, then, neither was Protestantism from the point of view of Catholicism a century after the Reformation.

On the other hand, the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints can and does make a credible case that its belief system is Christ-centered and therefore Christian in the truest meaning of that term. One may disagree with LDS interpretations of biblical stories—as one may disagree with various renditions in other Christian denominations—but that should not prevent a scholar of religion or an impartial observer from granting as much theological legitimacy to the one position as to the others. That Mormonism does not subscribe to the Apostles' or Nicene Creeds, or to the Westminster Confession, etc., is not a sufficient criterion for rejecting Mormons' claim to confession of and commitment to Christ as Creator, Messiah, and Savior who died on the cross for us all and who overcame death by his resurrection, and to the absoluteness and primacy of his teachings. The focus of discussion should be the Bible, not later formalized creeds quite removed from the culture of Jesus. Father Neuhaus' approach is not unlike Republicans claiming Democrats are not American.

The article confounds church organization and sincere beliefs of individuals when it attributes to Mormonism the doctrine that non-Mormons cannot be Christian. That is not quite accurate. LDS "official teaching" is that divine authority was lost with the original apostles and that historical Christian institutions are a mix of truth and error, but that individuals may be more or less Christian in commitment and conduct independently of churches (including the LDS).

Fr. Neuhaus further misunderstands LDS "official teaching" in asserting that it describes other church bodies (whether only Catholic or all historical Christian churches is not clear) as being "members of 'the great and abominable church' that was built by frauds and impostors." The LDS Church does not have an official position on what and who constitutes the "great and abominable" (a phrase without specificity from the Book of Mormon). When a book was published forty years ago by a young LDS church leader associating the Catholic Church with that phrase, the LDS Prophet-President had the book removed from the market and insisted on a revision that deleted the reference.

Fr. Neuhaus also uses an inappropriate word to represent LDS belief. For Mormons, Joseph Smith did not "rediscover" what had been lost; rather, it was a "revelation" to him direct from God—an important distinction.

Fr. Neuhaus concludes by saying

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that "as for the rest of us, we owe to Mormon Americans respect for their human dignity [and] openness to honest dialogue," but some of his language hinders that respect and openness. One might wonder how Mormon polygamy was more "sensational" than that practiced by such biblical figures as Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, David, and Solomon. Fr. Neuhaus even appears to vilify the Mormon view of "the celestial significance of marriage and family" by a very stretched comparison with the Unification Church of the Rev. Sun Myung Moon. That attack seems particularly strange since Catholicism (I had thought) attaches great significance to matters of marriage and family.

Fr. Neuhaus writes of LDS leaders: "The top leadership is composed, with few exceptions, of men experienced in business." Let's examine actual facts. Of the current Twelve Apostles, four came out of university academic careers, a fifth was an educator in the LDS seminary program, a sixth was a surgeon, and of the rest some were in small businesses. Of the current First Presidency, one has worked for the LDS Church virtually his entire adult life, another was a lawyer, and the third worked in newspaper publishing for about ten years prior to being called as an Apostle in his early thirties. Of the eight Church Presidents since World War II, not one was an executive of a substantial corporation. One was a teacher, two worked for the Church their entire life, a fourth was a teacher and small businessman, a fifth was a small town insurance agent, a sixth was an agricultural economist involved in promoting cooperatives, a seventh was a lawyer.

So, are Mormons Christian? That depends on one's definition; at the end, God will judge. While Mormonism agrees with Fr. Neuhaus that it stands "in radical discontinuity with historic Christianity," it disagrees that that tradition adequately or accurately defines the central issue. As a strongly committed seventh-generation Mormon and social scientist who has studied comparative religion for years, who has attended many different denominational worship services, who has served for years in multi-faith community service organizations, and who has been associated with and published in *Sunstone*, *Dialogue*, and *FARMS Review of Books*, I answer: yes, because I believe, believe in, and seek to imitate Jesus the Christ.

T. Allen Lambert
Ithaca, New York

Richard John Neuhaus apparently believes that Mormon intellectuals will ultimately get rid of such outrageous claims of the Mormon Church as revelations, new scriptures, and divine revelation and become like other Christians. As a member of the Mormon Church, I have two comments on this. First, Mormons have watched a dissident offshoot church, the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ, go through this process. That church is now almost indistinguishable from any other Protestant group, so the scenario is not only plausible, but being realized. The second observation is that I have listened intently to the voice of LDS intellectuals for over forty years, and have seen that voice mimic every fashionable trend to sweep academia, the latest being deconstruction.

I also found Father Neuhaus' approach to the Book of Mormon superficial. It recalled the statement of a certified Mormon intellectual, Hugh Nibley, who said that reading the book was not necessary before condemning it. I would also suggest that some of the criteria Fr. Neuhaus uses to dismiss the book would play havoc with entire sections of the Bible. Where, for example, is the archeological evidence for Moses or an exodus from Egypt? The Book of Mormon was the defining event in the foundation of the Mormon Church, and has remained, as Joseph Smith said, its cornerstone.

Joseph L. Lyon
University of Utah
Salt Lake City, Utah

In determining who is a Christian, neither the standard that the Church should be "identified with the Great Tradition defined by the apostolic era through at least the first four ecumenical councils" nor the view that Christianity is the "past and present reality of the society composed of Christian people" is apparently enough to hang your hat on. Richard John Neuhaus himself notes ("Incorrigibly Christian America II," March) the habit of some evangelicals of distinguishing between Roman Catholics and Christians. Along with the Orthodox and liberal Protestants, that's a billion-plus Christians booted out of the Bridegroom's wedding banquet. The Mormons welcome all of you to the left hand of God. There seems to be plenty of room over here. Latter-day Saints' faith is centered in Jesus Christ. He died, was buried, and rose on the third day. There is no salvation outside of his atonement. He will return to earth to reign and rule. Mormons worship and love Jesus as our Lord and Savior, we seek to follow his example and keep his commandments, and we pray to the Father in his name. This may not be enough for a board of theological overseers; it may be enough for Jesus Christ.

Tim Bone
Bremerton, Washington

In the January issue, Richard John Neuhaus endorsed William F. Buckley, Jr.'s assertion that aggrieved readers of journals should "cancel [their] own damn subscription[s]" rather than asking editors to do so on their behalf, so I've gone ahead and contacted your subscription department. The reason I'm writing to FIRST THINGS is that the woman who

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handled the cancellation of my subscription asked why I wanted to cancel, and I felt that perhaps I should tell you directly.

I found Father Neuhaus' article "Is Mormonism Christian?" deeply offensive. My personal respect and appreciation for the faith of those in traditional Christian denominations led me to assume that those feelings were somehow reciprocated. Fr. Neuhaus' article convinces me that in your case that assumption was a bad one. I've been a FIRST THINGS enthusiast for a little over five years now, purchasing it regularly in the BYU bookstore or subscribing to it, and on several occasions recommending especially good articles to my friends. But now that enthusiasm has vanished.

There's nothing wrong with a journal having a point of view; indeed, it seems to me to be inevitable. But I never realized until reading "Is Mormonism Christian?" how different the point of view of FIRST THINGS is from my own.

Thanks for several years of good reading. Best wishes.

Chris Grant
Salem, Utah

It has always struck me as strange that Mormons would call themselves Christians. It may be, as Mormons hold, that the idea of Christianity was hopelessly corrupted and disappeared after the death of the last apostle and that it came alive again only in the nineteenth century as revealed to Joseph Smith. That would mean that for almost two thousand years God left us bereft of the true meaning of His revelation in His Son and canceled His promise to be with us to the end of time.

That, as I say, is possible, but it is highly unlikely. It would mean that the whole notion of Christian tradition is a complete fraud and that for two millennia we have misunderstood the message, mission, and life-sustaining reality of Jesus Christ, the unique Son of God.

Therefore there is an essential choice to be made between traditional Christianity and Mormonism. Mormons, wonderful and courageous people as they are, are not Christians and can never be Christians until they commit themselves to the core belief that Jesus Christ, the unique Son of the one God, creator of heaven and earth, came among us in the flesh, was crucified, died, and rose again, and, with the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, forms one body, the Church. Mormons today do not believe this. Ergo, Mormons are not Christians.

Peter J. Riga
Houston, Texas

While the argument of "Is Mormonism Christian?" is generally well-taken, the comparison of Mormonism's approach to Scripture with that of the Unification Church of the Rev. Sun Myung Moon is erroneous. Unificationism takes the Bible to be the work of the Holy Spirit. We do *not* claim, as Richard John Neuhaus implies, that the biblical witness must be "corrected." We do not believe that the original revelations given the biblical writers were later corrupted. And we do not hold the view that the Church fell into apostasy.

The Unification Church does claim to have the correct interpretation of the Bible. We do claim additional revelations beginning with Jesus' call to Sun Myung Moon. These revelations call into question various traditions of biblical interpretation. They do not cast doubt upon the truthfulness of the Bible itself, any more than the gospel casts doubt upon the truthfulness of the Hebrew scriptures. Any failure we attribute to Christianity is not one of apostasy but of falling short at various times with respect to the moral teachings of Christ.

Tyler Hendricks
Unification Church
Washington, D.C.

As a member of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and a recent subscriber, I was drawn by the question, "Is Mormonism Christian?" Richard John Neuhaus' answer seems to be "not yet, but with time they might come to us. Meanwhile, *noblesse* and the law do oblige us to treat them civilly, and they can even be useful when their goals and ours coincide."

Leaving aside the condescension and hubris of all that, it puts me in mind of Humpty Dumpty's sweeping declaration in Lewis Carroll's *Through the Looking Glass*: "When I use a word, it means just what I choose it to mean—neither more nor less." Having determined that only those with Christianity's two-thousand-year history are to be masters of the word "Christian," Father Neuhaus finds, surprise, that the word includes him and excludes me.

C. S. Lewis correctly observed in the preface to *Mere Christianity* that when a word ceases to be a term of description and becomes merely a term of praise, it no longer tells you facts about an object, it only tells you about the speaker's attitude to that object. He also pointed out elsewhere that the first Christians were made by one historical fact—the resurrection—and by one doctrine—the redemption. It belabors the obvious to say that the early Christians knew nothing of two thousand years of history or of what Fr. Neuhaus calls "the Great Tradition." Yet they were Christians.

The word Christian, properly used, means a follower of Jesus Christ—one who believes what he taught, tries to live as he lived, and who has been baptized into his Church by the priesthood authority he bestowed on his apostles for that purpose. The difference between Fr. Neuhaus and me is that I don't think he has that Church and authority, and he doesn't think I have it. It will be in another life that we find out who's right.

In the meantime, we can each re-

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spect the other's belief and the sincerity of his efforts to follow Jesus' teachings. That would be the "Christian" thing to do, wouldn't it?

Richard B. Low
Calgary, Alberta

I have frequently said that when non-Latter-day Saint writers attempt to define the LDS faith, they always make the same mistake. They refer to non-LDS writers (e.g., the Ostlings) or *Sunstone* "dissenters and exiles." They need to come talk to someone like me. I do have a doctoral degree (J.D.), but I have never been described as an LDS intellectual. I am just a sixth-generation LDS member who tries imperfectly to live by a Christian religious code.

When I was on the regional board of the National Conference of Christians and Jews (NCCJ) in Southern California a few years ago, Jacqueline Wexler, a nun and president of the NCCJ, told me that the position of the NCCJ was that every religion has the right to define for itself what its beliefs are. I like that position. As a Mormon believer, that position gives me the authority to conclude that Mormons are Christians. I also conclude that the LDS religion is not, as Richard John Neuhaus suggests, a "new and another religion" akin to Islam, a "derivative of Judaism and Christianity" that does not claim to be Christian.

I believe that the first principle of the gospel is faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. I believe that if I can demonstrate my faith by repenting of my frailties, living the principles of the gospel of Jesus Christ, and enduring to the end, I may inherit eternal life and live forever with my family in the presence of the Savior. I was baptized in the name of Jesus Christ. I have been taught from infancy the teachings of Jesus from the New Testament (King James Version), and know that living the Christian principles of faith, hope, charity, love of my fellow men, and forgiveness will bring me the greatest fulfillment and happiness in this life. My family and I are Christians.

Father Neuhaus draws strength from writings peculiar to Catholicism, Latter-day Saints have the Book of Mormon and other works, Lutherans rely on Martin Luther, Presbyterians on John Calvin, and every denomination has differences in belief and emphasis. But we are all Christians. LDS President Gordon Hinckley recently emphasized that the Latter-day Saints have no monopoly on truth, and we invite all those who come to us to bring with them the truths they have. We hope we can add to that. We believe we can.

Howard Edwards
Park City, Utah

I thank Richard John Neuhaus for his insightful and fair-minded, if not fully accurate, commentary on the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and its relationship with the Christian tradition. I hope that his article can contribute to a higher level of open and mutually respectful dialogue in the future. As Father Neuhaus implies, whether Mormonism is Christian depends on the definition of "Christian." If being Christian includes as an indispensable component the acceptance of the Nicene and Athanasian Creeds set forth in the fourth and fifth centuries, then the LDS Church cannot be Christian since it clearly rejects a number of doctrines set forth in those creeds.

To understand in what sense LDS doctrine may be considered Christian, one must study what the Book of Mormon has to say about Christ and his doctrine. The Book of Mormon was written to "the convincing of the Jew and Gentile that Jesus is the Christ, the Eternal God, manifesting himself unto all the nations." To name only a few items, the Book of Mormon contains wonderful expositions of the fall of man (2 Nephi 2), the atonement of Christ (Alma 42), the nature of salvation through Christ (2 Nephi 9), the Christian covenant (Mosiah 2-5), the essential and sacred role of the Bible (1 Nephi 5; 2 Nephi 9), the nature of faith (Alma 32), repentance (Alma 5), baptism (Mosiah 18), the gift of the Holy Ghost (2 Nephi 31), and the fulfillment in these latter days of the covenant of the Lord with the House of Israel (3 Nephi 21). In these and countless other ways, the Book of Mormon joins the Bible as a true witness to Jesus Christ.

In my opinion, the Book of Mormon doctrine that there are only two churches—"the church of the Lamb of God, and the church of the devil" (1 Nephi 14:10)—should not be provincially interpreted to presume that only Latter-day Saints are members of the church of the Lamb of God. The Bible makes similar statements, which must be considered in a broader context (e.g., Matthew 12:30).

It is only recently that serious and fair-minded scholarship has addressed the archeological, cultural, and historical correlates of the Book of Mormon narrative (see, for example, John Sorenson's *An Ancient American Setting for the Book of Mormon*, Deseret, 1985). While such studies are important and undoubtedly will continue to yield enlightening discoveries, my suspicion is that there will never be enough positive evidence to convince those who wish to rely primarily on historical proof, simply because the Book of Mormon itself notes that its people shifted constantly between tents and improvised "cities" (Mosiah 9:4,8; Alma 48:80), the construction of which was limited to earth and timber (Alma 50:1-4). The population of the "Nephites" at the time of Christ's visit was only "2,500 souls" (3 Nephi 17:25). Larger population numbers of the "Lamanites" undoubtedly included indigenous peoples with whom the "Lamanites" intermarried. On the other hand, the lack of available historical evidence does

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not persuade believers to abandon their faith. It seems to me that this is substantially the same situation for biblical studies, as illustrated by the present debate between the biblical minimalists and the advocates of orthodox Jewish history.

The Book of Mormon contains this promise from God to all who read it: "I would exhort you that ye would ask God, the Eternal Father, in the name of Christ, if these things are not true; and if ye shall ask with a sincere heart, with real intent, having faith in Christ, He will manifest the truth of it unto you by the power of the Holy Ghost" (Moroni 10:4). This promise, which parallels James 1:5, is the means by which millions of Latter-day Saints (including myself) give their own witness to the truthfulness of the Book of Mormon, especially its Christian message, which agrees in all particulars with that of the New Testament.

Joseph B. Stanford
Salt Lake City, Utah

Richard John Neuhaus' observation that Mormons cannot expect, as their visibility and influence increase, to be "exempt from critical examination and challenge" is a fair one. We Mormons cannot benefit indefinitely from the ambiguity Father Neuhaus detects in the way we tend to present ourselves in relation to more common understandings of Christianity. But his efforts to clarify this relationship are hindered by his heavy reliance on the Ostlings' *Mormon America* and by certain assumptions regarding the meaning for a revealed religion of an intellectual tradition.

Fr. Neuhaus' candid assessment of "the founding stories and doctrines of Mormonism" is that they must "appear to the outsider as a bizarre phantasmagoria." While appearing for a moment to take seriously the question of the truth of these claims, he soon concludes that "outside the *fanum* of true believers, these tales cannot help but appear to be the product of fantasy and fabrication." Since he must after all be saying more than that such tales are believed only by those who believe them, Fr. Neuhaus is bound to give or to suggest some account of the substantial and growing success of such bizarre claims.

This seems to be his explanation: that there are, as always, those who believe such tales "uncritically," and then there are "more critical souls who embrace the community whose fabulous founding, they contend, points to higher truths"—that is to say, who don't really believe the tales. For the first group, the uncritical majority, "the conventional version, controlled by LDS authorities, [that] it is true if you believe it is true," seems to be enough. But Fr. Neuhaus is generous enough to hope that the number of critical souls, who now "find themselves in the company of 'dissenters and exiles,'" might grow and become dominant as Mormonism matures into a religion more hospitable to an intellectual tradition.

Of course Fr. Neuhaus recognizes that Christianity itself originally appeared as "foolishness" to the world's wisdom, but this seems for him to have been remedied by two thousand years of the most intense and sophisticated intellectual labor. But just what is the relationship between the originally scandalous claims and the now culturally confident and intellectually sophisticated tradition of inquiry? Does not the reality of Christ's resurrection—if this was a true event and not a fable—overwhelm in importance whatever an ensuing intellectual tradition might have to say about it? Does Fr. Neuhaus mean that Christ's resurrection can now have no meaning apart from the mediation of a venerable and ongoing debate concerning "alternative and opposing construals of reality"? How much weight does he mean to put on the observation that "almost all agree" with defining Christianity according to the terms of the first four ecumenical councils? He is certainly entitled to notice that the Latter-day Saints position implies that "almost all" are wrong. But it is not clear why it is legitimate to disagree about "where the Church is to be located historically and at present," but only up to the point where the foundations of a "Great Tradition" might be critically examined. Mormonism indeed invites such an examination. That is a large undertaking, in which we have much to learn. We welcome interlocutors.

We rejoice that the great truths of the Christian faith have been newly witnessed (and, yes, their meaning clarified) in our age by the coming forth, by miraculous means, of another ancient record, the Book of Mormon. Fr. Neuhaus has not explained why the miracles attending the emergence of this record should be considered less intellectually respectable than the older miracles upon which his intellectual tradition is founded—surely it is not simply that they are older. Nor has he explained why we should not take seriously the evidence for the veracity of this record that is available to the natural rational faculties and that Mormon scholars have long been sifting and evaluating: for example, the well-authenticated and consistent testimony of witnesses to the existence of the gold plates (even of a number of witnesses who had an interest in repudiating their testimonies); certain evidence internal to the text itself (structure, literary forms, etc.); and especially the puzzle of the sheer existence of such a substantial and complex text as the Book of Mormon, for which (contrary to Fr. Neuhaus' conventional but unfounded suggestion) no plausible naturalistic explanation has yet been offered.

Fr. Neuhaus surely has a point when he writes that "Mormonism is still very young. It is only now beginning to develop an intellectually serious theological tradition." But one

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must be open to the possibility that a tradition of critical inquiry might not develop in the direction Fr. Neuhaus seems to expect and to wish—that is, as theology grounded finally in the categories of Greek philosophy. For example, the lives of Mormons are likely to remain oriented more by revealed ordinances and covenants whose deep resonances and meaning for life may be praised or evoked in various learned vocabularies, but which are never fully present in any systematic articulation, and thus are not susceptible of representation by a specialized profession of theologians. This speculative suppleness and a certain lightness of doctrinal hierarchy might indeed be the key to a feature of Mormonism that seems to bewilder Fr. Neuhaus: that is, its capacity to adapt modern organizational means to the purposes of a living covenant community.

Ralph C. Hancock
Professor of Political Science
Brigham Young University
Provo, Utah

I wish to respond to just one particularly challenging statement made by Richard John Neuhaus: "Not a single person, place, or event that is unique to the Book of Mormon has ever been proven to exist. Outside the *fanum* of true believers, these tales cannot help but appear to be the product of fantasy and fabrication."

Trusting that Father Neuhaus is open to truth from whatever source it may come, such a statement can come only from a bias that archaeology offers the only acceptable form of evidence, or from innocent ignorance of the vast amount of reputable scholarship establishing linguistic, cultural, and religious and secular historical evidence that this truly amazing book is indeed the product of ancient writers.

In a recent article in the *Atlantic Monthly* (January 2000), Marc K. Stengel examines the types of evidence arrayed for and against the theory that ancient Asians and Europeans visited and established footholds in the Western Hemisphere from 7000 B.C. to the Middle Ages. Those scholars offering linguistic, cultural, and other compelling evidence for such visits are known as "diffusionists." Other scholars, known as "traditionalists," argue that the most important type of evidence—archaeological evidence—does not support this "crackpot theory."

The traditionalist argument is summarized in the following line of thought: the wheel and the keystone arch flourished in the Old World before Columbus. The wheel and the keystone arch do not appear in the material record of the New World until after 1492. Ergo, there was no contact between the Old World and the New World until after 1492.

I have heard only slightly less silly arguments against the Book of Mormon. For instance, since the gold plates are not available for examination, Joseph Smith was, ergo, a fraud. Or since no fourth-century stella have been uncovered in the jungles of Guatemala with the inscription "Mormon was here," there is, ergo, no evidence for the Book of Mormon.

The diffusionists' response is to examine "the nature of acceptable evidence." In looking at the nature of archaeological evidence—the wheel and arch evidence, for example—the diffusionists cite a simple fact. First, Mesopotamians intimately familiar with the wheel and arch had direct contact with Egypt for a thousand years, and yet there is absolutely no archaeological evidence in Egypt in all that time period that the Egyptians knew a thing about the wheel and arch. The evidence for the contact is found elsewhere, in linguistic and cultural similarities, for example. Rejection of these legitimate fields of scholarship reveals an unfortunate bias.

There are already highly qualified experts and scholars who have produced a great many books and articles regarding linguistic, cultural, secular-historical, and religious-historical evidence for the diffusionist theory as it relates to the Book of Mormon. These are largely Mormon scholars who have established a formidable mountain of scholarly evidence that the Book of Mormon is exactly what it purports to be: the translation of a religious record written and compiled by individuals who lived in the Western Hemisphere from 3000 B.C. to 400 A.D. and that it could not plausibly have been written by any man or group of men in 1829 in upstate New York.

This evidence cannot be ignored by any serious person who hopes to call himself a scholar, of whatever religious persuasion he may be. This is the conclusion of two honest evangelical scholars who, when they began to examine Mormon scholarship, were surprised at the numbers of Mormon scholars, their training, their sophistication, and their intellectual conclusions regarding the historicity of the Book of Mormon. (See Carl Mosser and Paul Owen, "Mormon Scholarship, Apologetics, and Evangelical Neglect: Losing the Battle and Not Knowing It?" *Trinity Journal* 19/2 [1998], 179-205).

A good place to begin an examination of the work of these Mormon scholars would be the thirteen-volume collected works of Hugh Nibley, a highly accomplished and widely respected scholar of ancient languages, early Christianity, and "Mormonism," recently published by The Foundation of Ancient Research and Mormon Studies (FARMS; see farms.byu.edu). FARMS is also an excellent resource to become acquainted with the first-rate academic work of a growing new generation of orthodox Latter-day Saint scholars.

But, alas, as any convinced Mormon knows, all the evidence in the world for the Book of Mormon will not begin to touch certain individuals, will deeply offend some, and will

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highly threaten others. FIRST THINGS experienced first hand some of these reactions in the "blistering letters of protest" to Dr. Joseph B. Stanford's article on Natural Family Planning ("Sex, Naturally," November 1999). "Didn't we know that Mormons are the enemies of Christ and his Church?" the letters asked. I for one applaud your well-founded and eminently reasonable belief that readers might find an article on NFP by a non-Catholic to be persuasive on this traditionally Catholic issue. I wish that all people could be so reasonable when it comes to religious issues.

Craig E. Hughes
North Salt Lake, Utah

RJN replies:

I am grateful for the many letters received, some of them not for publication, in response to the article on Mormonism. Well, not for all of them. Some were exceedingly uncivil in condemning my incivility in even raising the question of whether Mormonism is Christian. As should be obvious, the question posed by my essay is not civility but clarity—more particularly, clarity about what is meant by "Christian." As also should be obvious, I along with almost all Christians of all times subscribe to a normative view of what is Christian. Call it C. S. Lewis' "mere Christianity" or the Great Tradition or biblical Christianity, it includes the acceptance of the unique inspiration of the biblical canon and the end of public revelation with the apostolic era. As I wrote, "If Christian doctrine is summarized in, for instance, the Apostles' Creed as understood by historic Christianity, official LDS teaching adds to the creed, deviates from it, or starkly opposes it almost article by article." And LDS teaching does so on the basis of claimed new revelations to Joseph Smith and his successors.

Evidence that some thoughtful Mormons recognize the legitimacy of the question posed by my essay is found in an article by Jan Shipps, a noted non-Mormon scholar of Mormonism in *BYU Studies*, published by Brigham Young University. The title of the article is, interestingly enough, "Is Mormonism Christian? Reflections on a Complicated Question." Professor Shipps notes "the LDS Church's doctrinal insistence that all Christian baptisms are null and void except those performed by properly ordained holders of the LDS priesthood," and recounts the history in which culturally besieged Mormons insisted that all other Christians are truly "other"—Gentiles outside "the only *restored* church of Jesus Christ that had been on the earth since the days of the 'Great Apostasy.'" In recent decades, however, with the achievement of a greater cultural confidence, Prof. Shipps writes that there has been a "turn away from labeling outsiders as *Other* [that] has coincided with the dramatic turn toward Christian rhetoric and Christian themes, not only in Mormonism's official presentation of itself to the world, but in Mormon life generally."

I am now inclined to think that my essay, like the Ostling book (*Mormon America*) that I cited favorably, overestimated the degree to which Mormon intellectuals who explore difficult and sometimes embarrassing questions are viewed by the LDS as "dissenters and exiles." There are academics and others in very good standing who are wrestling with these questions and are eager for dialogue with (other?) Christians. As I wrote, that dialogue should at present be viewed as interreligious rather than ecumenical (i.e., intra-Christian), but, historically considered, Mormonism is still very young, and that could change in the century ahead. We should hope so.

Misrepresentation?

More disappointing than the dismissive tone of the note on my book, *The American Myth of Religious Freedom* (Briefly Noted, March), is its violent misrepresentation of what the book argues.

First, I do not agree with the *New York Times*—nor could my book be reasonably read to argue—"that a bishop who excommunicates a politician violates the First Amendment." Rather, I argue that when the First Amendment is pressed to the full power of its genius, it does not necessarily (or even probably) offer protection of such an act by such a bishop from government sanction (see *Employment Division v. Smith* and *City of Boerne v. Flores*). Even readers less sophisticated than those of FIRST THINGS will see the severe distinction between these ideas.

Second, neither Harold Bloom nor I argue that "Christianity in America since the Pilgrims [is] basically heterodox and Gnostic." Nor is any such idea remotely contemplated in my book. Rather, Bloom and I agree that the "American religion," Gnostic and (ironically) Pelagian as it is, arose in the nineteenth century through the vehicle of various exotic variations on the Christian narrative, as well as the more "mainstream" Southern Baptists and the Restoration Movement. The notion that your reviewer ascribes to my book cannot be found there.

Third, I would be interested to know which of your readers (other than the reviewer of my book, I suppose) disagrees that "Hobbes' understanding of natural rights [is] the assertion of individual autonomy."

Fourth, one need only superficially read Locke, Jefferson, and Madison to see that they regarded the Catholic Church of their day as "the enemy of religious freedom." It is a naked idea in their writing. (Why else a *novus ordo seclorum*?) That they might not regard the Catholic Church of *our* day as an enemy of their version of religious freedom is an indication of the success of their agenda. Unfortunately, your readers do not know that I make a tentative

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suggestion of a different way to understand religious freedom in the latter part of my book.

Fifth, I explicitly and repeatedly argue that "the First Amendment encourages religion in public life." Indeed this was the strategy of the Founders' design to dilute the power of Christian witness against the State.

Finally, while my teacher Father Ernest Fortin disagrees with much in my book, no student can forget his oft-repeated metaphor that the natural law tradition and the natural rights tradition are like the flow of water from the Continental Divide. They go in *irreconcilably* opposite directions. Your reviewer has apparently not read Fr. Fortin either.

It is certainly fair to be critical—even dismissive—of my book. It is most unfair, however, both to the author and your readers to publish such a wildly tortured summary of the book. I have experienced firsthand your stringent requirement that reviewers fairly represent the books they review, even when disagreeing with the argument. You will understand my surprise and disappointment, therefore, that you suspended this requirement in the present case. Your reviewer was not honest.

Kenneth R. Craycraft, Jr.
Duke University
School of Law
Durham, NC

Daniel P. Moloney replies:
As the author of the review in question, I would like to respond to the points Kenneth R. Craycraft, Jr. makes in his letter, beginning with his last point. It is too strong to say that Ernest Fortin "pressed home" the existence of a medieval tradition of individual rights theories. It would have been more accurate to say that he grudgingly acknowledged the scholarship of Brian Tierney and the theoretical labors of Jacques Maritain and John Finnis on this point. (See his "On the Presumed Medieval Origins of Individual Rights" in *Classical Christianity and the Political Order*, Roman and Littlefield, 1996, pp. 248-49.) When Father Fortin talks about theories of natural rights, he usually means the modern theories associated with Hobbes and Locke, which do have the theoretical and theological problems Dr. Craycraft enunciates in his book. It is the older theory that John Courtney Murray, the Second Vatican Council, and arguably even the United Nations wish to embrace. Dr. Craycraft's book, by failing to discuss this other theory of individual rights, fails to engage the argument about religious freedom as it currently stands. As for his other complaints, the first two make distinctions irrelevant to the criticism in the review, the third and fourth misread the criticism (I criticize Dr. Craycraft for *agreeing* with Hobbes, Jefferson, et al., not for *misinterpreting* them), and the fifth point contradicts the first—how can the First Amendment promote religion in public life if it fails to protect the public religious actions of a bishop from government sanctions? One might well argue that the *Smith* and *Boerne* decisions read the First Amendment incorrectly, while Dr. Craycraft thinks they express its "full power." For years scholars, not least in these pages, have examined arguments like those of Dr. Craycraft, and found them wanting. It is not unreasonable to ask that Dr. Craycraft address arguments opposing his own.

Within, Without

Richard John Neuhaus' analogy (While We're At It, March) between the impact of the NCAA on Notre Dame's internal affairs and the proposed implementation of the norms of *Ex Corde Ecclesiae* does not work. The NCAA is a voluntary organization formed by the academy itself to oversee the athletic activities of colleges and universities in the United States, and its rules and enforcement procedures are the result of a consensus of peers. The very point of critics of the norms of *ECC* is that their formulation and proposed implementation did not come from within the academy but from without.

Richard W. Conklin
Associate Vice President
University of Notre Dame
South Bend, Indiana

RJN replies:
And is not the Catholic Church an institution to which the University of Notre Dame is voluntarily related? Since it does call itself a Catholic University, it would seem that the "rules and enforcement procedures" of the Church do not come "from without" the University's definition of itself.

Christianity in China

Allen D. Hertzke's article, "What I Learned in China" (March), suffers from a number of shortcomings. First of all, the believers that Professor Hertzke was meeting with were not representative of the church in China. It appears from his article that he was meeting with university students and professors and communicating with them in English. But the church (the body of believers) is largely rural, uneducated, older women for whom questions such as party membership are far removed. With just over three million university students and less than 5 percent of China's total Communist Party membership (where Christian faith is growing much to the chagrin of party leaders), the portion of Christians Prof. Hertzke spoke with is far from representative. At the same time, intellectuals and professionals are grossly underrepresented in the churches of China, and thus in many cases are ignorant of what church life is like in China. On the one hand, though Beijing and Shanghai with their growing middle class are

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exceptions, most intellectuals in China feel uncomfortable associating with "the masses" who make up most of church membership. On the other hand, Western mission efforts on university campuses in China have tended to set up their own alternative fellowships outside the local (registered or unregistered) church structure. This reflects both the parachurch bias of contemporary evangelicalism and the age-old missionary temptations surrounding the issues of popularity, personality, and control.

Second, Prof. Hertzke's analysis of the lack of interest in civil society among Chinese intellectuals is shallow and gives insufficient credit to China's own nascent conceptions of civil society. China has long placed social stability at the top of its list of public goods. The emphasis on corporate experience and identity within Chinese culture is a challenge to the Western conception of a civil society based on specifically individual freedoms. As Christians who are citizens of the benevolent dictatorship known as the kingdom of God, surely there are acceptable definitions of what constitutes civil society that might look different from our classical Western definitions. There is in fact a substantial literature on the question of civil society in China, most of which highlights the enormous progress that has been made in the last decade (see, for instance, articles published in the pages of *China Quarterly*). Rural elections, though often dismissed by American observers as irrelevant to national policy, have nevertheless led to a marked degree of democratization on the local level.

And as any student of China will tell you, the average citizen has much more to do with his local government and much less to do with his national government than we in America. Ironically, Chinese government is experienced as federalist while American government is increasingly experienced as national and monolithic. What Prof. Hertzke sees as the contrast between economic liberalism and single-party oligarchy, Chinese people of all walks of life see as an attempt to keep things stable. The negative example of Russia is always present in the back of their minds, as is the incredible patience that Chinese history both symbolizes and inculcates. Prof. Hertzke accurately recorded what he heard from the Chinese intellectuals he spoke with, but his analysis is shallow and oversimplified.

Third, Prof. Hertzke uses American terminology to discuss the status of the church in China, and this leads to inaccuracies. "House churches" in China are not illegal—many believers worship in homes. According to China's constitution, Chinese citizens are guaranteed freedom of religious belief and freedom of speech; however, they do not have freedom of assembly. This means that regardless of whether you worship in a factory or in a cave, in a house or in a cathedral, the salient point from the government's perspective is whether or not your assembly is registered. And registration itself is amenable to local situations. In our city some 100 to 150 home fellowship groups are "registered"—but registered with the local church, and not the Religious Affairs Bureau (RAB) per se. In many rural areas, particularly in the North, believers worship in homes or other buildings, and yet for practical, nonpolitical reasons they are not registered. In some cases the RAB officials could not care less what the Christians do—as long as they don't engage in antisocial behavior (such as the Falun Gong fraud cases). Nor is registration status necessarily a bone of contention within the church. I recently surveyed pastors and seminary professors in China and found they agreed with what I have witnessed: in Northern China Christian workers make no distinction between registered and unregistered believers in terms of who they serve, teach, baptize, or provide with printed materials.

Admittedly, in Southern China conflicts between the registered and unregistered churches are much more common. But these conflicts rarely find their root in government politics. Often the conflicting churches exist because a given area had two charismatic Christian leaders and yet China's nondenominational policies required them to work together—perhaps one under the other's authority—and so one party rebelled. In other cases, contacts with Christians from overseas—often through Hong Kong—have created separatist churches that are utterly dependent on overseas funding and materials. Likewise, the overseas organizations that support them *must* find evidence of extensive violent persecution or else they lose their ministry and their fundraising appeal. This pattern is not new to China, nor are these problems foreign to missions around the world.

Finally, Prof. Hertzke's assertion that "officially sanctioned seminaries and ministers are not free to preach the pure gospel" is simply not true: there is no system of sermon censorship. Last Christmas I heard the best evangelistic sermon I've ever heard in my life, and it came from the pulpit of my city's local registered Three-Self church with city government officials present and listening. Many souls were saved for Christ that night. And the seminaries, like their counterparts in the U.S., are made up of both orthodox and not so orthodox faculty members. If the top few seminaries seem worse than the others, it is due only to their increased exchange with the less orthodox side of American seminary life. But the teachers teach what they like.

Prof. Hertzke's confusion on this point is just one of many commonly held Western assumptions about the church in China that simply don't hold true. Contrary to popular belief, the official magazine of the

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Three-Self church in China (*Tian Feng* or "Heavenly Wind") has more testimonies, biblical content, and theological teaching in one issue than a year's worth of *Christianity Today*. Bibles are cheap and available at the churches to all—in the major metropolitan areas there are programs to distribute them free of charge to nonbelievers. The only restrictions on my fellowship with local believers are ones I myself and all of mission history agree with—in fact, they are the same three-self principles (self-governing, self-propagating, and self-supporting) that Roland Allen and others propounded so many years ago.

I invite Prof. Hertzke and others associated with FIRST THINGS to come and visit Western Christians like myself who have been living in China, who speak the language, and who have been worshiping with a particular group of local believers for some years. Meet the folks in the pews, not just the foreigners who flit in and out like secret agents, muddling in local contexts they do not have the time to understand. This will give a different and far more representative impression of what it means to be a Christian in China today.

Andrew T. Kaiser
Shanxi Evergreen Service
Taiyuan, Shanxi
People's Republic of China

Allen D. Hertzke replies:

Like the blind men in the fable, each of us can only grasp a part of the elephant that is China, and we all learn from each other's experiences. Thus I welcome the opportunity to learn from, and dialogue with, Andrew T. Kaiser.

I will respond to each of his major arguments, but a more general point is in order here. The rosy picture he paints of religious freedom in China not only contrasts with what I heard, but with a huge documentary record assembled by independent church groups, human rights organizations, and our own State Department. All of those entities report numerous instances in which House Church Protestants and unregistered Catholics have faced exorbitant fines, arrest, and beatings for their faith. Christian churches have been closed, destroyed, or had their assets confiscated. Buddhist Tibet is a virtual police state; Muslim Xinjiang is approaching that. I wonder if Mr. Kaiser has allowed his optimism to color his general perception.

To be sure, wide variation exists in the way authorities treat unregistered churches, and we should applaud those instances in which incipient civil society or local democracy is sprouting. But after all, this is still a Leninist-party regime that will attempt to crush any perceived threat to its monopoly on power.

Let me now turn to Mr. Kaiser's specific charges. First, he argues that I present a distorted picture because the believers I met constituted an educated elite unrepresentative of Chinese Christians. That is obviously true in some demographic sense, but I wonder how relevant it is in light of the extensive growth of Christianity in China. Here Mr. Kaiser himself seems conflicted. He claims that the Christian church is largely composed of rural, uneducated older women, yet he testifies to the vibrant growth of the church, of many souls saved for Christ. I assume these people are not just older rural women.

Second, I did not say that there was a lack of interest among Chinese intellectuals about civil society. Quite the contrary. I said that there was a tremendous interest in civil society and even in the role that religion might play in its development. What I also said is that the government fears civil society. And on that score the evidence is overwhelming. Has Mr. Kaiser read the trenchant reportage of David Aikman, the documentation by Compass Direct or the Cardinal Kung Foundation, the reports by Voice of the Martyrs? What does he make of the courageous public communiqué out of Henan province by house church leaders, some of whom now sit in Chinese jails?

Here Mr. Kaiser emerges as an amazing apologist for the Chinese regime. He claims that the Chinese people experience their government as truly federalist, while we in America experience it as national and monolithic. Thus, China is really more democratic than America! Even China's most vigorous defenders in the U.S., who frequently employ arguments of moral equivalence, have not gone that far.

Third, Mr. Kaiser seeks to correct the record on the legal status of churches in China. He notes that the Chinese Constitution "guarantees" freedom of religious belief and speech, but not freedom of assembly. Thus house churches are not illegal, as I allege, and people can worship in their homes undisturbed. Problems arise only with respect to registration for assembly.

But how seriously can we take constitutional guarantees in a one-party state? Can anyone really argue that freedom of speech is enjoyed in China? Our own founders feared that a mere "parchment barrier" would not be enough to protect rights. How much more ought we to be suspicious of Chinese authorities who can use registration laws as they please to clamp down on believers? The distinction Mr. Kaiser draws is a fine one indeed. Freedom of worship inherently involves freedom of assembly.

Finally, Mr. Kaiser challenges my statement that officially sanctioned seminaries and ministers are not free to preach the pure gospel. Perhaps I left the wrong impression here. The gospel, happily, is preached in numerous Three-Self congregations and Patriotic Catholic parishes, and many believers have worked out complex accommodations to government realities. But why do the majority of China's Christians refuse

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to worship in such places, often at some risk?

One explanation rests on the nature of government control over seminary education. There may be no outright sermon censorship, as Mr. Kaiser argues, but the system has powerful means of ensuring political conformity. Students who attend official seminaries must demonstrate "political reliability," pass tests on political knowledge, and profess support for the Chinese Communist Party. Can anyone doubt what would happen to a typical Three-Self seminarian or minister who challenged the government's treatment of house churches?

Mr. Kaiser clearly embraces the idea of "oriental difference" with respect to human rights concerns. He argues that many average Chinese, along with authorities, desire stability more than Western-oriented individual rights. Given what the Chinese have been through this last half century—devastating man-made famines and the convulsions of the cultural revolution—stability and some measure of prosperity are indeed good things. But they are clearly not enough for many of the faithful. Nor should the government be allowed to justify harsh treatment of independent churches with the excuse that they might undermine stability.

I remain awed by believers in China, whether they worship in underground fellowships or in registered churches. In both cases they must develop strategies to avoid the state's intrusive glare. And I have no doubt that many Chinese experience authentic Christianity in "official" churches. But I stand by my contention that such state-sanctioned churches cannot satisfy the spiritual hungers of China's restless people. Why is that is so hard to fathom?

The Charmed Life

This sleight of hand persists
The light through bands of leaf
The lemon scented knife
Our gods like fading mists

This hocus pocus just goes on
A choir of frogs announcing spring
The rain wet skin of musk that clings
A thin smirk on a wedge of moon

This sullen sorcery colludes
With youth's extravagance
Of turrets and rose gardens
Laughing streets where dusk never intrudes

The magic cup and blessed wafer
Arthur rising from his mythic sleep
The ghost dances and vigils that we keep
With perfect virgins and yet we are no safer

This sleight of hand resists
The falling of those leaves
The lemon cleanser scent deceives
Even at the knife the dream persists

B. R. Strahan

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THIS TIME

The Politics of the Id

James Nuechterlein

My first political epiphany came at the movies. I was about thirteen years old, and in those days, somewhere between the previews of coming attractions and the main feature, you got a newsreel. This one featured a violent political protest in a Latin American country (I think it was Panama). I watched in fascinated revulsion at the mostly young protesters' undiscriminating destruction, unappeasable rage, and unreflective assurance of virtue. What kind of country, I thought, conducts politics this way? Thank God we don't do that here.

That was, of course, a pre-sixties experience. It occurred in the blessedly placid fifties—a period, I came to understand later, that was less the normal American way of things than a relatively uncharacteristic era of tranquility in a tumultuous national history. We began in revolution, after all, and the national experience has been marked with periodic populist outbursts.

Still, that moment left an indelible mark on my political consciousness. Chalk it up to Lutheran quietism if you will, but it seemed to me then and afterwards that it is a form of insanity to conduct politics in the streets. Political decisions, I thought and think, should be determined by debate that, however lively—even impassioned—finally yields to rational argument. The politics of mass protest is the politics of the id. It is, by its very nature, the enemy of democratic persuasion. Even when nonviolent, it tends to mindlessness. We are, of course, creatures of passion. All the more reason, therefore, to keep that passion in check. Large public demonstrations invite demagoguery and irrationalism, and they amount to a populist vote of no confidence in the orderly processes of representative government.

For every rule, there are exceptions. One thinks of the early civil rights movement, when blacks excluded from the political process in large parts of the South could make their voices heard only in marches, sit-ins, and demonstrations. (Much the same could be said of the pro-life movement today.) I myself participated in Martin Luther King, Jr.'s massive March on Washington in 1963, and have never regretted it. Indeed, it was an incandescent political moment, and it played no small part in prompting passage of the historic Civil Rights Act of 1964.

But it was an exception, and its success came at a cost. A whole generation of dissenters learned its presumed lessons too well: they took the exception for the rule, and soon were taking to the streets at every provocation and with little of the restraint and discipline that marked the original event. It was a long way downhill from the grandeur of King's "I have a dream" to the ugliness and incivility that marked so much of the street politics of the sixties. By the time cartoonist Al Capp, creator of *L'il Abner*, came up with his satirical S.W.I.N.E. (Students Wildly Indignant about Nearly Everything) late in the decade, it was difficult to distinguish between caricature and reality.

All this came to mind watching the coverage of the protests during the meetings of the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank in Washington this April. The protests, a more restrained replay of the violent outbursts during a gathering of the World Trade Organization last fall in Seattle, were long on outrage and short on coherence. The enemy is "globalization," but it's not clear what alternative the protesters have in mind. Their declared ideal—"a system that is democratic, that values the environment, and that puts the needs of the world's people before the profits of transnational corporations"—amounts, as David Frum notes in a *New York Times* op-ed, to "the anarchist equivalent of Dick Morris sound bites."

The first time tragedy, the second time farce. The protesters of the sixties and seventies—many of them anyway—knew what they had in mind to remedy the evils of the present system. As Frum recalls: "Once upon a time, the left possessed a clear and coherent vision of a better world. Resources were to be owned collectively rather than individually. Important economic decisions would be made by the state rather than by private managers and owners. Everyone would earn more or less the same amount. This ideal was called socialism, and . . . it commanded the assent of a very considerable number of intelligent people."

That was then. With the passing of the late unlamented Soviet Union, people aren't much interested in socialism anymore—or if they are, they hesitate to say so out loud. That would appear to leave capitalism, in some form or another, as the only game in town. But that seemingly inexorable political logic does not register with today's protesters. If they can't

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credibly be pro-socialist, that does not prevent them being vehemently anti-capitalist. They may have no idea how to build the new Jerusalem, but they're bent on destroying Babylon. As Frum says of the protesters, "They still know what they hate."

I suspect that Frum overstates the differences between the old protesters and the new. The radicals of the sixties weren't all socialists, and even the socialists were often remarkably imprecise about what they meant by the term. As the late Irving Howe famously put it, "Socialism is the name of our dream." My sense of the sixties' radicals is that, much like our current dissenters, they were far more clear on what was wrong with the system than on what might replace it. And they too were fueled by an amorphous rage that provided justification enough for their politics. When it comes to radical protest—and this applies as much to the fringes of the right as of the left—hatred is pretty much a constant.

That's the point. The problem with mass protest politics is not so much with ideology (or its absence); it is rather that it encourages the indulgence of our least attractive emotions, hatred and self-righteousness chief among them. It is unsurprising that the politics of the street so often ends up in violence.

There are obvious intellectual temptations as well. Street politics is politics reduced to what fits on a placard or can be rhymed into chant. It is the politics of cheap theater, the opposite of what deliberative democratic politics ought to be. I recall a comment of the late television newsman Harry Reasoner. After covering one too many mass demonstrations, he remarked that he would like to carry a placard of his own, one bearing a counter-slogan suitable to virtually all such occasions: "It's Not That Simple."

It comes down to this: the politics of the streets is politics at a dead end. FT

The Strength to Grasp

Ephesians 3:14-21

No heart too small that its every beat
is not known, weighed and measured.

These are the rules:
size does not matter, depth does,
and breadth, and height shimmers in the distance
far above, where eyes grew blurry with
the cold and wind and airlessness

But no matter: that is not
what this is about; it is about that one
what, the inscrutable how, which
explains itself beyond explaining when I
behold the fresh and newborn gaze of my child,
of my beloved

and so plunge myself into the deep
enfolding ocean
of your love.

Eugene Zemp DuBose

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Opinion

J. S. Bach in Japan

Uwe Siemon-Netto

Twenty-five years ago when there was still a Communist East Germany, I interviewed several boys from Leipzig's *Thomanerchor*, the choir once led by Johann Sebastian Bach. Many of those children came from atheistic homes. "Is it possible to sing Bach without faith?" I asked them. "Probably not," they replied, "but we do have faith. Bach has worked as a missionary among all of us." During a recent journey to Japan I discovered that 250 years after his death Bach is now playing a key role in evangelizing that country, one of the most secularized nations in the developed world.

When Bach died on July 28, 1750, after two botched eye operations performed by John Taylor, a quack from England, his last major work, *The Art of the Fugue*, remained incomplete. It culminates in a quadruple contrapunctus bearing his signature, for it is formed from the letters b-a-c-h (in German musical terminology b-natural is called "h"). Just as you might expect the final section of Fugue 19 to begin, the music stops eerily. The blind man no longer had the strength to pull together its various themes to a perfect ending. Instead he dictated to his son-in-law a powerful last chorale—*Vor deinen Thron tret' ich hiermit* (Before thy throne I come herewith)—and then he departed.

The Art of the Fugue is perhaps Bach's most abstract and intellectually challenging work. Yet its pristine grace led Arthur Peacocke, the English theologian and biologist, to aver that the Holy Spirit himself had written it, using Bach's hand. A quarter millennium after the composer's death, this quality of his music provides Christianity with a curious inroad to a group of people who in the past had resisted evangelization more effectively than any other: Japan's elite.

Masashi Masuda, from Hokkaido, Japan's northernmost island, told me how Glenn Gould's interpretation of Bach's *Goldberg Variations* had first aroused his interest in Christianity. "There was something about that music that prompted me to probe deeper and deeper into its spiritual origins," he said. Masuda is now a Jesuit priest and a lecturer in Systematic Theology at Tokyo's Sophia University. Yoshikazu Tokuzen, rector of Japan's Lutheran seminary and president of his country's National Christian Council (NCC), echoed Peacocke: "Bach is a vehicle of the Holy Spirit." As evidence Tokuzen cited an astonishing statistic. Although less than 1 percent of the 127 million Japanese belong to a Christian denomination, another 8 to 10 percent sympathize with this "foreign" religion. Tokuzen explained: "Most of those sympathizers are part of the elite, and many have had their first contact with Christianity through the music of Johann Sebastian Bach."

"I fit into this category," said my interpreter Azusa, a twenty-five-year-old law student. She pulled a CD out of her handbag. It was a recording of Bach's cantata *Vergnügte Ruh', beliebte Seelenlust*, whose lyrics explain that God's real name is love. "This has taught me what these two words mean to Christians," she explained, "and I like it so much that I play this record whenever I can."

Azusa made it clear, though, that while she recognizes Christianity's beauty as a phenomenon going far beyond cultural aesthetics, she is not yet a convert. In this she typifies perhaps millions of highly educated Japanese who resist taking the leap of faith—or admitting to it—although they are painfully aware of what Tokuzen calls the "spiritual void" into which their society has slipped.

Two-thirds of all Japanese profess no religion. However, of this vast majority, 70 percent deem religion important for society. "Yet Buddhism and Shintoism, Japan's traditional faiths, have long lost their credibility," said Martin Repp, a German Lutheran theologian who is the deputy director of the NCC's Center for the Study of Japanese Religions in Kyoto. "Today their roles are only ceremonial, and most of their temples are mere tourist attractions." "Churches could pick up the slack if they were not so self-absorbed, especially the mainline Protestant denominations, to which most Christians in Japan belong," Repp continued. "Most wealthy congregations are only thinking of themselves and give little money to missions; meanwhile, international mission societies are curtailing their budgets for Japan."

Kummi Tamai, a successful American-trained evangelical pastor, called most of his colleagues lazy evangelizers. He chided them for not providing a challenge to the young who, according to Repp, feel hopelessly alienated from their parents' generation. "In their frenetic pursuit of production, speculation, and consumption," Repp said, "the older Japanese have provided their offspring exclusively with materialistic values. But the youngsters are yearning for something more. The result is an enormous gap between the generations; they are no longer able to communicate with one another."

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The ensuing spiritual crisis manifests itself in many ways. No other country in the developed world keeps as many palm readers busy. None produces as much pornography; nearly half the world's smut is made in Japan—and openly consumed in trains and subways. Suicide rates have risen from 23,000 in 1996 to 25,000 in 1997 and 32,000 in 1998. In that year, seventy-four children killed themselves in Tokyo alone, twice as many as in 1997. According to opinion polls, 60 percent of the population admit to being afraid every day. Most fear bringing shame on their families, teachers, or superiors by failing at work or in school.

"What people need in this situation is hope in the Christian sense of the word, but hope is an alien idea here," says the renowned organist Masaaki Suzuki, founder and conductor of the Bach Collegium Japan. He is the driving force behind the "Bach boom" sweeping Japan during its current period of spiritual impoverishment. "Our language does not even have an appropriate word for hope," Suzuki says. "We either use *ibo*, meaning desire, or *nozomi*, which describes something unattainable." After every one of the Bach Collegium's performances Suzuki is crowded on the podium by non-Christian members of the audience who wish to talk to him about topics that are normally taboo in Japanese society—death, for example. "And then they inevitably ask me to explain to them what 'hope' means to Christians."

Like Georg Christoph Biller, Leipzig's current *Thomaskantor* and Bach's sixteenth successor in that position, Suzuki sees himself as a missionary. "I am spreading Bach's message, which is a biblical one," he said, echoing the Swedish theologian and Lutheran archbishop Nathan Söderblom (1866-1931), who called Bach's music "the fifth Gospel." A member of the Reformed Church, Suzuki makes sure his musicians, mostly non-Christians, get that point. During rehearsals he teaches them Scripture. "It is impossible to say how many of my performers and listeners will ultimately become Christians," Suzuki said. He believes, however, that Bach has already converted tens of thousands of Japanese to the Christian faith.

Suzuki assembled his Bach Collegium less than ten years ago. Since then, he estimates, "anywhere from one hundred to two hundred other Bach choirs have popped up around this country." Suzuki is even responsible for introducing the German word *Kantate* (cantata) into the Japanese vocabulary; it is currently a highly fashionable term. Suzuki's concerts are always sold out. Every Good Friday more than two thousand Bach enthusiasts pay hundreds of dollars each for a ticket to his ensemble's performance of the *St. Matthew Passion*. "It is very moving to watch this enormous crowd follow the Japanese translation of the German lyrics word for word," Professor Tokuzen said. "Where else in the world do you find non-Christians so engrossed in biblical texts?"

Japan's Bach boom does, however, have one baffling aspect: how is it possible that melodies and rhythms from eighteenth-century Germany should please people of an entirely alien culture thousands of miles to the east? Tokyo musicologists have come up with an astonishing answer: Bach's appeal to today's Japanese is directly linked to a Spaniard's first attempt to evangelize their ancestors 450 years ago.

In August 1549 the Spanish Jesuit Francis Xaviér (1506-1552) became the first Christian missionary to land in Japan. In the decades that followed, the Jesuit and Franciscan fathers baptized 20 percent of its population, including members of princely families. It soon became fashionable to promenade around Nagasaki carrying rosaries.

But in 1587 the shogun Hideyoshi expelled all missionaries, and a murderous persecution of all Christians followed. Believers were crucified, burned at the stake, tortured to death, or hanged upside-down over cesspools to intensify their suffering. Few Japanese were aware of this sinister aspect of their history until last year, when the Tobu art gallery in Tokyo commemorated the 450th anniversary of Francis Xaviér's arrival with a massive exhibition spread over three floors.

The enormous crowds filing through this show were horrified by the cruelties its images portrayed. But there was one thing they did not learn at the Tobu Gallery: Western music managed to survive the persecution. The Jesuits had introduced Gregorian chant to Japan and built organs from bamboo pipes. They trained Japanese children so well in handling the queen of instruments that in the 1560s three princely wunderkinder from Nippon were competent enough to be sent to Europe to play the organ before illustrious audiences, including one in the Vatican. By the time Christianity was totally outlawed in Japan in the early seventeenth century, elements of Gregorian chant had infiltrated Japan's traditional folk music. That influence remained strong enough to help Johann Sebastian Bach's music sweep across the island nation more than four centuries later.

This explains the amazing success of Bach's collected works, which were published by Sogakukan, a Tokyo company, to commemorate the 250th anniversary of the composer's death. This collection of fifteen volumes, including 156 CDs accompanied by books with the original lyrics in German and Latin plus their Japanese translations, cost a staggering $3,000 each. Within weeks the first edition of five thousand copies was sold out.

The collection's editor, Tesuo O'Hara, described

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himself as one of Christianity's sympathizers, though not a believer. He could have fooled me. "What makes Bach so successful among the Japanese?" I asked him. O'Hara replied, "Bach gives us hope when we are afraid; he gives us courage when we despair; he comforts us when we are tired; he makes us pray when we are sad; and he makes us sing when we are full of joy."

Perhaps Bach, transcending cultural barriers, has converted more Japanese than any of us dares to imagine.

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Modernist Impasse, Christian Opportunity

Charles Colson

The dawn of a new millennium finds us at what some have called the modernist impasse. During the past generation, as the writings of European existentialist philosophers swept across this country, people began to believe that the ultimate object in life was personal autonomy. The "do your own thing" mentality gripped us in the sixties, was translated into a variety of slogans in the seventies and eighties, and has emerged as an extreme individualism that is now our highest value. This passion for autonomy is responsible for many of the social pathologies that plague our nation. It has even affected our understanding of law, and profoundly so.

We now see that the 1973 *Roe v. Wade* decision was about much more than abortion. It was about the Supreme Court of the United States finding in the Constitution an implied right to privacy that extinguished the moral debate going on in all fifty state legislatures. That decision has led to innumerable decisions in which the judiciary has taken more and more of the rights of self-government away from the people—all in the name of a right of privacy, that is, personal autonomy. The most egregious example of this is the 1992 *Casey v. Planned Parenthood* decision. In words written by Justice Anthony Kennedy, but which might as well have been written by Jacques Derrida, the Court handed down the following: "Liberty is defined as the right to define one's own concept of existence, of being, of the universe, and of the mystery of human life."

This obsession with autonomy has created utter chaos. For example, it has led us to a sexual epidemic, to brutal violence, and to the rampant fatherlessness that is at the root of so many of our social pathologies. I've been in six hundred prisons across America; I've looked in the faces of these kids, and I have watched them over twenty-five years of ministry. Those faces have changed. Twenty-five years ago, you could talk about God the Father and at least those kids had a frame of reference for what you were talking about. Today, God the "Father" is a bad word. I've seen the anger in the eyes and the lack of any real conscience. Conscience, the law written on the heart, is in these kids horribly malformed, for it has no basis on which properly to be formed. Augustine had it right: the desire for autonomy is "a deadly corrosive for the soul."

Unmitigated love of autonomy has led us to one of the most galvanizing contemporary events. It will be recorded by historians as the Columbine High School tragedy. I have called it the Pearl Harbor of the culture wars, because suddenly people have been caught up short. They thought that they had an adequate worldview, a secular modern worldview that gave them all the freedom they could want. But all of a sudden they discovered that the wonderful fruits of that worldview have produced tragedy. They saw on display at Littleton two fundamentally opposed worldviews. On the one hand they saw Eric Harris and Dylan Klebold, self-professed disciples of Hitler, himself a disciple of Nietzsche, who proclaimed the news that God is dead, denied the reality of evil, and celebrated a radical will to power.

But at the same time they saw that worldview on public display they also saw the worldview of two girls, Rachel Scott and Cassie Bernall, who would not deny their faith and were gunned down in cold blood. And for a week thereafter the world saw on every news broadcast those incredible church services, both Protestant and Catholic, which exalted Jesus, featured parents forgiving the slayers of their children, and showed what was almost a celebration of the lives of the kids killed by their classmates. Columbine forced the culture to look at those two worldviews, displayed in vivid relief, and choose which way they will live. It is as if God was saying, as He did to His people of old, "I have set before you life and death. Choose life." People are becoming eager to listen to something more reasonable and more rational as a way of life than what led to Columbine. There is evidence

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that the culture is beginning to change even before our very eyes.

Just look at the indicators. Crime, for one, is today down to pre-1973 levels. Part of that can be explained by demographics, part by the huge explosion of prison construction that now accommodates 1.9 million people in America's prisons and jails, and part of it by the kind of community policing that New York, among other cities, has adopted. But these alone do not fully account for the changes we are seeing.

Welfare has been cut in half, and the percentage of the population on the public dole is the lowest since 1967. The divorce rate is down 19 percent since 1980. Teenage pregnancies are down 12 percent since 1991. The number of sexually active teenagers in high schools has declined for two years in a row. Abortions are down 15 percent since 1990, despite the regime of the most pro-abortion President in our history.

The nation's moral discourse is changing as well. Just over two years ago, I participated in a television round table with five other talking heads. When I suggested that the inner city crisis was basically a moral problem, there was an awkward silence. The host looked at me as if I'd just arrived from some distant planet. After a nervous cough or two and a lengthy pause during which no one said anything, a woman two seats away from me finally piped up saying, "Yes, that's why we built a new community center here in D.C." They just didn't get it; they didn't understand what I was talking about. And yet it wasn't a year later that I was on every major talk show explaining what moral reformation is, what repentance is, and why private morality has public consequences.

The polls indicate that people want something different. Right after Columbine, a *Wall Street Journal*/NBC poll asked Americans about their values. Eighty-four percent of those who described themselves as conservative and 33 percent of those who described themselves as liberal agreed that a priority of contemporary America was to promote respect for traditional values. What was until recently a pejorative term has now become something both conservatives and a large minority of liberals would identify as a national priority. In the same poll, 58 percent said youth violence was the number one social issue, and 76 percent said they favored federal funding for faith-based solutions to public policy problems. This is evidence of a significant shift in our nation's values.

We're witnessing the coming of what Professor Russell Hittinger describes as the death throes of modernity. We're seeing its dying gasps, as people are recognizing that the prevailing value system of the past forty years simply doesn't work. This is what provides believing Jews and Christians of all confessions (and, I would add, moral conservatives who draw their moral views from the accumulated wisdom of Western Civilization) such an extraordinary opportunity to reshape the culture.

In the sixteenth century, Erasmus sought to create a network of like-minded scholars from across Europe in the hope that, joined together around the truth, they would be able to restore a moral consensus and save Western culture from sectarianism, nationalism, and superstition. Erasmus crossed confessional lines and intellectual disciplines in his effort to renew moral life on the Continent, publishing the works of a wide range of scholars from many nations.

Although Erasmus did not succeed in his project, his strategy was the right one. Today we must, in every discipline, in many and varied contexts, and with a spirit of mutual love and encouragement, reach across confessional divides and present together a rational and biblical view of life that can reach our desperate neighbors and transform our culture. This is precisely what is needed as we enter the new millennium—not just for the sake of the Church, but for the greater good of mankind.

What must we do to make our case for Christian truth? What is our challenge as we enter the new millennium?

First, Christians must understand that faith in Jesus Christ is much more than a matter of personal conversion and salvation (the heart of the Evangelical faith); and it is much more than liturgy (a principal focus of the Roman Catholic faith). Christianity is a worldview. It is a way of comprehending all of reality by seeing all of life through God's eyes. It affects every single aspect of life; it isn't simply a matter of, "I'm saved, you're saved, and we're okay." It is a matter of God, Creator of all, being Sovereign over all. As Abraham Kuyper, the great Dutch theologian and political leader, put it, "There is not one square inch in the whole domain of our human existence over which Christ, who is Sovereign, does not cry out, 'Mine!'" Christians must recognize this in order to know the fullness of life in Christ, to be able to formulate a defense of Christian truth in every single area of life, and to begin taking back our culture in the name of the King of kings.

Next, we must understand that the great battle going on in the world today is not the culture war. Rather, it is a cosmic struggle over first principles, as Kuyper also recognized. At root are competing answers to the question of how we understand reality itself. This issue turns on the question of origins. On the one hand, secular naturalism argues for a materialistic explanation for the origin of the universe, the earth, and human life. On the other hand, opposed to

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secular naturalism, biblical theism testifies to the God who is, who is not silent, who spoke us into being, and who reigns over the earth and all His domain. If we are to persuade a hungering world that our view of reality is true, we must be prepared to advance our case in both word and deed and to present a sound cultural apologetic.

This is a strategy Christians have pursued from the earliest days of the Church. When Christians were accused of heinous crimes against the Roman Empire in the second century, they not only defended Christianity rationally, on the merits of the faith, but also answered the objections of the rulers of Rome by challenging them to look at the way Christians lived. Justin Martyr argued that the Christian life was more rational and created a better-ordered society. The writer of the *Epistle to Diognetus* boasted of the morality of his Christian contemporaries, as did Tertullian a generation later. Augustine engaged in cultural apologetics famously, of course, in *The City of God*, as Aquinas did much later in his sweeping *Summa Contra Gentiles*. John Calvin and other reformers carried on this tradition in the Reformation by showing how Christianity improved every sphere of life, personal, communal, and cultural.

We must make precisely this same case today, and we must make it comprehensively, and together. Consider the law that holds together the fabric of a nation. As we have seen, it has been hijacked by judicial activists who say law is not found in any overarching standard but merely in what judges say it is. The public needs to understand the Judeo-Christian idea that law must be reconnected to transcendent truth.

Similarly, a powerful case must be made that Christians have been and are the great defenders of human rights and human dignity, not just for the unborn, but in every area of life. The Star of David and the Cross of Jesus Christ have stood as great scandals to the tyrants of this world because they express belief in a King above the kings of this world. One thinks of the great nineteenth-century abolitionist Sojourner Truth; of the English parliamentarian William Wilberforce and the noble effort he led to bring an end to the British slave trade; of Susan B. Anthony, who was a pro-life Quaker. That is our Christian tradition, our common heritage.

Understanding and defending Christianity as a comprehensive worldview enables us to do something else that, in the long view, may be more important than rescuing a culture. It enables us to achieve Christian unity in a way that could perhaps not be possible otherwise. All Christians must bear the shame of the millennium just ended in which the world has been offended not by the scandal of the Cross, but by the scandal of division among us. Whether it is the division that erupted at the beginning of this millennium between East and West, the rift of the last five hundred years between Roman Catholics and the heirs of the Reformation, or any of the countless rifts and strifes that divide Protestantism today, it is *our* shame; it belongs to every one of us.

Now, as one who has incurred no small number of battle scars for my role in the ongoing dialogue called Evangelicals and Catholics Together and for my commitment to reaching out across the confessional divides, I want to be the first to say that there are still deep divisions that remain between communions. ECT has made some progress, but I do not minimize or trivialize the issues that separate us. But the fact is, as we begin to see Christianity as a worldview, we are able to do what Edward Cardinal Cassidy argued is the duty of Christians: to work for unity, because unity is the normative condition that Jesus himself called for and established. It is unity for which Jesus prayed, and to work against it is a sin. Seeing our faith as a worldview helps us to work toward that divinely sanctioned condition, because, while divisions remain among us, we nevertheless engage in what my good friend, Dr. Timothy George of Beeson Divinity School, calls "the ecumenism of the trenches." We discover that we stand and fight side by side as Evangelicals and Roman Catholics. In doing so, we are enabled to see beyond those divisions, as important as they are, when our focus is upon the great contours of Christian truth as it is presented and defended in the world.

There was no more determined a Calvinist reformer than Abraham Kuyper. He saw clearly our need for unity. In his famous Stone Lectures of 1898 at Princeton, Kuyper described what happens when we see Christianity as a worldview: We "might be enabled once more to take our stand by the side of Romanism in opposition to modern pantheism. For what we have in common with Rome are precisely those fundamentals of our Christian creed now most fiercely assaulted by the modern spirit." "If Roman Catholics pick up the sword and do valiant and skillful battle against the same enemy," Kuyper argued, "is it not the part of wisdom to accept their valuable help?" It is precisely this kind of ecumenism of the trenches that moved Father Richard John Neuhaus and me to begin the work of ECT.

Now the spirit of ECT is spreading around the world. A group similar to ours has been meeting for several years in the Republic of Ireland. Just recently, I received an invitation to speak to a group of churches in Nebraska. This group, comprising several Protestant churches of various denominations and a number of Roman Catholic churches, has been meeting together to discuss how to put ECT into practice. In South America, Evangelical leaders have

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been meeting with the Catholic Bishops Conference, and just recently the two issued their first joint statement. And just a few weeks ago, in Sofia, Bulgaria, the ministries of Prison Fellowship International came together for our international convocation. On the closing night, the host ministry, which is heavily influenced by the Bulgarian Orthodox Church, held the communion service. Unconsecrated bread was shared by Protestant, Catholic, and Orthodox believers in a spirit celebrating the great truths held in common in Christ.

I believe we can succeed in bringing Christian truth to bear on our culture only if we stand together in defense of our common faith, drawing upon the best of our respective traditions. The Roman Catholic tradition offers much: the Church's historic role in the culture, the authority of the Magisterium, a commitment to scholarship, and a long tradition of reflection on social and political issues, particularly a concern for social justice and the poor. As an Evangelical, I have to confess that the Roman Catholics were in the trenches of the pro-life struggle before we were. We were laggards until Francis Schaeffer challenged us in the seventies. The Catholic tradition brings a great commitment to the life of the mind, as well as a passion for the arts. It is a tradition with an appreciation of a well-formed worldview.

On the Evangelical side, we bring much to the table as well, especially what I call the Evangelical impulse. The Evangelical impulse is fueled by three distinct elements of evangelicalism: first, an emphasis on personal conversion; second, devotion to Scripture; and third, belief in the priesthood of all believers, which energizes a whole army of people to do marvelous works of service, turning every legitimate vocation into a ministry.

Those who say today that we should give up on the culture—that there's nothing more we can do to win the culture war—should study the history of the great revival that began in 1858, when just ten men gathered to pray in downtown New York in the Dutch Reformed Old North Church. They assembled under the gathering storm clouds of war, in a time of great economic uncertainty. Jeremiah Lanphier gathered ten men to pray every day at noon. Before long, seven hundred churches joined them. Within six months, every public facility in New York City was filled to overflowing, and ten thousand people were in the streets gathering every day for noon prayer.

That revival spread up the Hudson River, into Canada, across the sea to England, throughout Europe, and then on to the entire English-speaking world. It resulted in the great awakening of the latter half of the nineteenth century, out of which came such organizations as the Salvation Army, a pure demonstration of Evangelical enthusiasm. In this country, it inspired the great work that followed from the preaching of Dwight Moody. (It is ironic that some of Moody's spiritual heirs are critical of the work of ECT; were Moody alive today, he would be one of the first at the ECT table. In 1893 Moody invited Roman Catholics to the platform at his crusade in Chicago. More significantly, in his hometown of Northfield, Massachusetts, Moody contributed to the building of a Roman Catholic church, arguing that if people are going to be Christians, whether they're Catholic or Protestant, the object is to help them to be good Christians.)

If Catholics and Evangelicals come together, combining the great strengths of our two traditions; if God fuels us with the Evangelical impulse, this love of God which comes from our conversion; and if we are faithful to the scriptural commandments, then a great army of people will be unleashed to defend and demonstrate Christian truth in the world. Ours is a truly wonderful opportunity as the world looks around and surveys the shambles of the modern experiment.

The history of the twentieth century is a catalogue of failed utopian promises. It started with post-Edwardian triumphalism, wonderfully captured by a scene in the movie *Titanic* in which a British aristocrat starts to board the ship. He looks up at it, this enormous feat of modern engineering, and he arrogantly proclaims, "Even God couldn't sink this ship." You know the rest.

The same fate has befallen every one of the other twentieth-century "isms": Darwin's and Hegel's ideas about continuing revolution and progress; the utopianism of Dewey and Freud that has crippled education and our sense of responsibility; scientism; Marxism; National Socialism; humanism; materialism; consumerism. All of the great utopian promises of the twentieth century lie in shambles. Some of them are still with us today, but they are bankrupt ideas waiting to be swept into the dustbin of history. We stand at a moment in time—a remarkable, extraordinary moment—when and if, following the example of Erasmus and Kuyper and the teaching of Jesus, Christians can come together across those historic divides and bring the great strengths of our traditions to bear, we will see John Paul II's springtime of evangelism come to glorious harvest.

CHARLES COLSON's *latest book is* How Now Shall We Live?, *coauthored with Nancy R. Pearcey. This essay is adapted from the Erasmus Lecture delivered in New York City. The annual lecture is sponsored by the Institute on Religion and Public Life.*

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Suicide and the Alienated Life

Daniel Avila

Walter Benjamin once said that authors should write the article or book they looked for in the literature but could not find. Because so much has been written about assisted suicide, one would think little else needed to be said on the subject. Yet when I looked for a serious discussion about why we should consider the right to life "unalienable," I was disappointed. This lacuna on such a foundational question seems odd since, by definition, a right to assistance in one's suicide implies a right to the alienation of life. Therefore, the dearth of commentary on unalienable rights in the assisted-suicide context is surprising. Thwarted in my search for sources, I am left to create a source of my own.

The Declaration of Independence immortalized the concept of unalienable rights when it grounded the American Revolution on the defense of natural rights. Years after writing the Declaration, Thomas Jefferson argued that "nothing then is unchangeable [in the design and conduct of the United States government] but the inherent and unalienable rights of man." In addition, colonists in Massachusetts rejected the first proposal for a state constitution in 1778 primarily because it lacked any reference to unalienable rights. The 1780 redraft written by John Adams, with assistance from Samuel Adams and James Bowdoin, asserted that all persons "have certain natural, essential, and unalienable rights; among which may be reckoned the right of enjoying and defending their lives." This language survives as part of the oldest continuously operating constitution in the world. The constitutions of twenty-eight other states, as well as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, contain similar language. These facts suggest that the idea of unalienable rights is more than rhetorical window dressing. Why is it that our country's founders insist on the recognition of certain rights as inviolable *and* unalienable?

Richard Tuck provides some background in his 1979 book, *Natural Rights Theories: Their Origin and Development.* According to Tuck, certain philosophers posited the existence of a natural personal freedom so broad as to allow individuals to consent to any form of outside control, even slavery and tyranny. Luis de Molina of Portugal defended the African slave trade in 1601 on the grounds that the Africans sold to European traders were already enslaved by other Africans as a result of intertribal wars. The slave trade was excused by the purported natural right of Africans to consent to arrangements whereby the victors in war could enslave the vanquished and sell them to others. Francisco Suarez of Spain asserted that "slavery and other, similar matters" are "not opposed to natural law" since, in his view, persons could sell or alienate their liberty in the same way they could transfer their property. Hugo Grotius, John Selden, Thomas Hobbes, and Robert Filmer each defended forms of absolute rule by monarchs because, in their view, such authority presumably arose from an "original contract" between a monarch and his or her subjects. If individuals were free to give away their personal freedom, then an entire population could hand over its political freedom in exchange for security. Since a deal is a deal, rebellion by the disadvantaged is unjustified even in the face of political oppression.

John Locke is the most famous opponent of this view. In his *Two Treatises on Government*, he asserted that our "natural liberty" is still subject to a "natural law" that "willeth the peace and preservation of all mankind." We lack the authority to agree to our own enslavement or destruction because we are the "workmanship of one omnipotent and infinitely wise maker." We are thus bound to preserve our lives and "not to quit our station willfully." Since we lack "the power over [our] own life," we "cannot by compact or [our] own consent enslave [ourselves] to anyone, nor put [ourselves] under the absolute, arbitrary power of another to take away [our] life." Thus, advocates of practices amounting to slavery or political oppression could not assert in their defense some original bargain or "tacit consent" because no agreement, whether real or implied, could warrant such practices. Slavery and oppression constitute a "state of war" and thus justify the rebellion of the tyrannized against a tyrant.

The American colonists found in Locke's writings the argument for their revolt. Whatever "deal" existed between the King of England and his subjects, no original bargain or tacit consent could justify "taxation without representation" and other acts of tyranny. According to Samuel Adams, it would be "the greatest absurdity to suppose it in the power of one or any other number of men at the entering of society to renounce their essential natural rights, or the means of preserving those rights, when the great end of civil government . . . is for the support, protection, and defense of those very rights [including] life."

The legal philosopher Hugo Grotius understood unalienable rights as interests "which belong so

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essentially to one man that they could not belong to another, as a man's life, body, freedom, honor." In other words, natural unalienable rights are so fundamentally linked to the physical existence and political status of individuals that any attempted alienation would be impossible or self-contradictory. In his 1978 book, *The Massachusetts Constitution of 1780: A Social Compact*, Ronald M. Peters, Jr. described the prevailing colonial view about unalienable rights as follows:

> If a natural right is inherent, then it must be essential to the very existence as a human being of him who possesses it. If this is the case, then it must be quite literally impossible for that individual to forfeit the power of controlling it. Therefore, it is unalienable because it cannot physically be alienated. . . . The really unalienable rights of men, according to Article I [of the Massachusetts Constitution], consist not of life, liberty, happiness, or property; but rather they are the "right of enjoying and defending their lives and liberties," and the right of "acquiring, possessing, and protecting property." Society can take a man's property, but not his right to acquire or possess it. It may even take his life, but the individual still has the right to fight in order to defend it. These rights are "natural, essential, and unalienable" because they define the very meaning of being a human being. A man who could not do these things would not be a man. . . . It would be contrary to human nature.

Other philosophers have composed variations on this theme. John Stuart Mill argued that self-regarding acts intended to renounce one's own freedom cease being exercises of freedom, and defeat the purpose of laws permitting freedom. Thus, "the principle of freedom cannot require that [one] should be free not to be free. It is not freedom to be allowed to alienate [one's] freedom." In the same manner, Immanuel Kant asserted, "If freedom is the condition of life it cannot be employed to abolish life and so to destroy and abolish itself. To use life for its own destruction, to use life for producing lifelessness, is self-contradictory." More recently, Daniel Callahan has argued that "We cannot, I believe, transfer our sovereignty to another without contradicting it. A sovereignty that can legally and morally be given away is fragile and contingent, not sovereignty at all. To allow another person to kill us is the most radically imaginable relinquishment of sovereignty, not just one more way of exercising it."

Such philosophical ruminations may seem too esoteric to have much influence on public opinion. Yet somehow this doctrine sparked a political revolution in 1776. Understanding how and why the American Founders made their case as they did may provide some insights into how the unalienable rights doctrine can, and should, influence public opinion on assisted suicide.

Had it been the case in 1776 that every colonist was a patriot, and none a loyalist, then Jefferson would have needed only to refer to threats against the *inviolable* rights of the colonists. An inviolable right is one that cannot ever be justly violated, while an inalienable right cannot ever be given away. As it was, Jefferson needed to claim that British rule threatened rights that possessed both qualities, since many colonists backed the Crown and resisted any call to oppose it. They took no offense and complained of no violation, thus providing cover for the Crown against any charge that it was violating colonial rights. The loyalists were willing to give the Crown a level of control that the patriots deemed tyrannical. Since the loyalists and the patriots shared the same political status under the law as British subjects, the loyalists' acquiescence to the legal policies of the Crown directly affected the patriots. Jefferson had to assert that the loyalists' rights were being violated, simply in order to protect his own. This is what led him to complain of threats to certain *unalienable* rights.

The relationship between the loyalists and patriots in 1776 is not much different from the relationship today between the terminally ill members of the Hemlock Society and the terminally ill members of the group Right to Life in Oregon after the passage of Oregon's new assisted-suicide law. For this new law affects the legal status of all persons with terminal conditions by considering them to be candidates for assisted suicide *whether or not they want to be eligible.* Oregon's legalization of assisted suicide sweeps within its purview both those who wish to give up their right to live and those who don't.

The law may serve the interests of the terminally ill members of the Hemlock Society, but the same law provides the terminally ill members of Right to Life with cause for complaint. The Oregon law cannot be defended on the grounds that the killing it permits is supposedly voluntary. The resulting devaluation of legal status, whereby all terminally ill persons will now be treated under the criminal law of Oregon as having a merely *alienable* right to live, is for the terminally ill members of Right to Life an involuntary assault on their dignity under the law. This injury will only be exacerbated as the laws are extended to surrogates who can request lethal injections on

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behalf of adults and minors who cannot speak for themselves.

At stake then is a principle that is neither religious in nature (religious principles having no legal standing in the public square) nor too difficult to grasp—we do not have the right to cause harm to others who do not consent. Assisted-suicide advocates often refer to the obverse of this principle, the so-called rule of autonomy, by asserting that they have a right to do to themselves whatever they want as long as they do not harm others. As demonstrated here, however, while the commission of a suicide in individual cases might be considered a harmless exercise of autonomy (but only if we ignore the detrimental social consequences), the *legalization* of assisted suicide cannot be so considered because it necessarily involves a public act affecting the legal status of everyone.

When a suicide law fails to distinguish Hemlock members from Right to Lifers, Not Dead Yet members, or devout Christians, but considers all these people eligible for suicide assistance when they are terminally ill, then the status-based injury it inflicts on members of the latter three groups actually *violates* any so-called rule of autonomy. No individual or group has the right to devalue the legal status of others against their will. While Hemlock members may reject their status as persons with an unalienable right to live, they share that status with others and thus cannot unilaterally alter it without injuring others. No amount of regulations or safeguards can avoid this result.

This political and legal analysis, I believe, provides the best legal argument against allowing assisted suicide. By this I do not mean that the mere assertion of this argument in the public arena will magically turn the tide. Sentiment and self-interest still reign supreme. Some may even respond that the coercive destruction of another's full-fledged legal status is necessary to achieve some utilitarian objective, and that the interests of Hemlock members outweigh the interests of Right to Life members. But by then the debate will have moved to a different key. Choice and autonomy would no longer be the stated bases for changing the law to favor suicide assistance. All I wish to demonstrate is that for those supporters of assisted suicide who value more than just their own autonomy, who are not swept along by emotion, and yet who do not share my religious or philosophical vision, an argument can be made against the legalization of assisted suicide in terms that are principled, comprehensible, and convincing.

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The Friendship Club

William A. Schambra

In 1997, in a seedy back alley just off Fond du Lac Avenue in Milwaukee's inner city, Shameika Carter's body was found beneath a pile of clothing. She had been beaten and strangled to death. She was not unfamiliar to the police called to the scene, with a record of four arrests on drug charges. At her last arrest, three bags of cocaine had been found in her coat pocket.

Her family pointed out that she had recently been seen with a stranger at the nearby Friendship Club, upon which a cloud of suspicion immediately descended. But Eugene Kane, a local journalist familiar with the central city, soon set the record straight. The Friendship Club, he wrote, was a fiercely independent social club for people in recovery, established in the 1970s by low-income African Americans after it had become clear to them that they were not welcome at other recovery clubs. The club sat in a tough neighborhood, around the corner from a massive, derelict former Sears, right between MJM Liquors and Club Sensations. Yes, it welcomed prostitutes, as well as the shivering addict, the homeless wanderer, and the bleary-eyed, hung-over drunk. As long as they obeyed the rules rigorously enforced by members—no drugs or alcohol, no physical abuse, no weapons, no gambling—*everyone* could find a home at the Friendship Club.

I was intrigued by Kane's article, so I visited the Friendship Club. It was precisely as described: a social club, with high-intensity card games, a lively pool table, a blaring jukebox, and a bar. But behind the bar were to be found only fruit juices and soda. The schedule for the numerous AA, NA, and other twelve-step support groups that rented space upstairs was posted prominently. Before we left, Alex Mitchell, one of the club elders, had proudly thrust into my hands a maroon-covered volume, *The History of Friendship Inc.*, an eighty-five-page monograph commissioned on the occasion of the club's twentieth anniversary in 1994, prepared by member James Miller.

Based on the minutes of the club's board meetings and reminiscences of the elders, it told the *real* story of the Friendship Club, warts and all. The struggles among various factions and charismatic leaders. The secession of dissident groups to start their own social clubs. The pressure from landlords seeking back rent.

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Committees springing up like weeds, but failing to do their work, or even to meet. Members failing to pay their dues. Boards of directors suddenly resigning—or being fired—en masse. Liquor bottles surreptitiously passed at club events. Rumors about grant funds gone missing.

As I read the history, this realization suddenly came to me: I was staring into the turbulent, murky wellspring of civil society. And then this realization: for all of today's scholarly and public attention to civil society, a group like the Friendship Club would be completely overlooked.

Why would I suggest that the Friendship Club is the wellspring of civil society? As we learn from Alexis de Tocqueville and the other classical theorists of civil society, the indispensable function of civic associations in a free society is instruction in the art of self-governance. Democratic self-government requires a citizenry able to manage its own public affairs, which citizens learn only by doing—by coming together and working on a common public task, with the ends and means settled upon only after slogging through the messy, aggravating democratic process of argument, debate, bargaining, and compromise. And that occurs most effectively within the small, face-to-face communities sociologists describe as "intermediate associations" or "mediating structures."

Tocqueville insisted that learning the art of self-government within local, civic associations would be particularly critical in the new age of mass democracies, when public life would appear to be dominated by vast, impersonal social forces far beyond the average citizen's understanding or control. The great temptation in such times—in our times—is to turn public affairs over to an equally vast and impersonal bureaucracy of experts, who will all too readily agree that they and they alone know how to deal with those social forces. Now more than ever—precisely when it seems to be *least* appropriate, useful, or fashionable—the decentralized, self-governing civic association becomes indispensable for the preservation of self-government.

For the addicts of Fond du Lac Avenue, the Friendship Club is the first and by far the most difficult step out of a life dominated by external forces and into a life of self-governance. This is true for club members in the most literal and immediate sense, of course. Their lives had become radically, physiologically dependent on drugs or alcohol, and breaking that dependency was the club's first task. But as anyone who has been around addiction knows, chemical dependency is usually accompanied by all sorts of other real or imagined dependencies on outside forces, which make drugs or alcohol seem necessary. I must drink because the factory where I used to work closed down, or because I'm poor, or because my family was dysfunctional, or because I live in a cruel, oppressive society. And I can't stop drinking unless I get into that government detox program run by a bunch of MSWs and PhDs.

However powerful these externalities may be, the old hands at the club will tell us in no uncertain terms, they simply are not acceptable excuses for drinking or drugging. Their seemingly iron grip on our fate—their hitherto unchallenged sway over our wills—must be challenged and broken. Only when we succeed in becoming dependent on a higher power (which for most club members is unmistakably the God of Scripture) can we become truly self-governing.

The club cultivates self-governance in another sense by being as much as possible a self-contained and self-governing community. Members slowly acquire virtues like personal responsibility and self-possession by hands-on engagement in the day-to-day governance of the club. They elect committees from among themselves to open and close the club, work behind the juice counter, clean up, conduct fundraisers, and recruit new members. The picture is not always pretty, as we've seen. The habits of self-governance, in both the personal and public sense, do not come easily to individuals who have spent years, perhaps decades, plunged in irresponsibility. The newly elected secretary may indeed not be seen for months. But only by struggling together patiently and humbly through the chaos, confusion, and corruption that seem to be intrinsic to popular self-rule do the members slowly develop the capacity for democratic self-government. As an intrinsic part of the personal recovery process, members of the Friendship Club acquire the political habits essential to American democracy.

But if this is all true, why, in this time of heightened attention to civil society, are we likely to overlook the manifest contributions of the Friendship Club? Consider first the way conservatives tend to regard civil society. For many of them, it seems to be the realm of charity, volunteerism, and the benevolence of the compassionate rich toward the hapless poor. General Colin Powell's manifestly well-intentioned mass mobilization of volunteers to do good deeds in the inner city is a good example of this approach. It assumes that there is nothing but desolation and emptiness there, until we wealthy suburbanites bring our brushes, buckets, and shiny faces down to slap a fresh coat of paint on its grimy walls.

How does the Friendship Club fit into this framework? Not at all. The entire point of the club is that there *is* something good in the inner city, started and run by the residents themselves, entirely without the

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benevolent attentions of suburban do-gooders. The last thing the club needs is the paternalistic condescension of well-meaning volunteers, operating from the premise that recovering addicts cannot be expected to manage for themselves. It would directly nullify the club's efforts to inculcate self-government among its members. It is unlikely that the club would know what to do with such outside "help." It is certain that most conservatives would not know what to do with the Friendship Club.

Activists on the left are no better. "What can civic ties possibly accomplish if residents of a community have declining incomes and no jobs?" laments Michael Shuman of the Institute for Policy Studies. A great deal, the club might reply, for building civic ties is almost exclusively what it does. It does *not* take on politically the larger economic and social systems that, organizers are persuaded, dictate conditions in the inner city. Not that those systems and conditions are unimportant, or that club members have no involvement individually in changing them. But to suggest that the individual is powerless in the face of seemingly overwhelming social forces is to rationalize addictions, not conquer them. To focus the club's energies on changing the surrounding conditions—on *external* transformation—might fatally compromise its essential message of personal responsibility and *internal* transformation.

In truth, though, today's discussion of civil society typically focuses neither on suburban volunteers, nor on radical community activists, but on that vast realm of often quite substantial organizations and agencies known as the "nonprofit sector"—the Boys and Girls Clubs, the Red Cross, the PTA—that defies easy categorization in either the conservative or radical frames of reference. Yet the nonprofit sector is not any more likely to welcome the Friendship Club into its midst. For nonprofits have become less and less agents of community self-governance over this century, and more and more agencies for the delivery of social services.

To appreciate this transformation, it is necessary to understand the larger development of which it is a part, namely, the triumph of the American progressive vision over the course of the twentieth century. At the century's outset, progressive theorists like Herbert Croly, Walter Lippmann, Edward Alsworth Ross, and John Dewey concluded that daunting new social forces like industrialism, urbanism, and immigration were sweeping away the old America of small, self-governing local communities. To avoid social chaos, a new order would be needed, but now compelling and encompassing enough to tame those forces. Happily, they believed, the new century also brought with it new sciences of society so potent that they would enable us to forge a coherent America on a scale dwarfing the old rural village. Frederick Taylor's scientific management taught us how to reorganize ourselves—business, labor, government, and civic sectors alike—into towering, efficient, bureaucratic social machines. In the penthouses of these new pyramids sat experts credentialed in the emerging disciplines of economics, sociology, and psychology. Modeled on the omnipotent natural sciences, they gave the new authorities such powerful insights into hitherto inscrutable social forces that they and they alone could understand, harness, and tame them. Armed with the social sciences, the experts could marshal the turbulent masses into coherent, productive units with a few deft, austere, rational directives.

Ordinary citizens, still immersed in benighted, parochial loyalties to family, faith, ethnicity, and locality, were incapable of the detached scientific objectivity necessary to cope with the twentieth century's new social forces. Their distorted and partial views only cluttered up the neat, unified, national vision of the scientific elites. Far better for Americans now to think of themselves, not as self-governing citizens, but rather as passive, grateful clients of the credentialed experts who would assume the burden of rationally directing public affairs. In short, Tocqueville's science of association was discarded as a quaint relic of the past, as his nightmare vision for the new age became progressivism's utopian dream.

Under the sway of this dream, irrespective of the prospects of governmental funding, the nonprofit sector transformed itself along rationalist, progressive lines. Today it is dominated by mammoth associations that are indistinguishable from large government agencies, with centralized, bureaucratic management structures executing directives issued by headquarters in Washington. Would such a sector embrace the Friendship Club? That sector prides itself on its scientific basis, while the club is clearly an organization rooted in ethnicity and faith. A good nonprofit is orderly, rational, and structured, while the club appears to be disorderly, irrational, and unstructured. A good nonprofit hires experts to deliver services to passive clients, while the club insists that its members must be self-governing citizens helping each other, with only the expertise of the streets necessary. The nonprofit sector would more than likely regard the Friendship Club at best as a remote and somewhat disgraceful family relative.

We have arrived, then, at this paradoxical conclusion. The Friendship Club, which I suggest is the wellspring of civil society, nonetheless does not at all fit the descriptions of civil society championed by conservatives, liberals, or centrist nonprofits. For the

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club seeks to be a genuinely self-governing community, not the passive object of the attentions of sympathetic volunteers, steely-eyed political organizers, or well-meaning therapeutic experts.

Given this paradox, it would be easy to be pessimistic about the future of civil society. Indeed, pessimism does seem to be in the air, especially in the wake of Robert Putnam's famous 1995 jeremiad entitled "Bowling Alone." Putnam fears for the future health of civil society because of the drop-off in the membership of major civic groups in America, including most notably the PTA. But let us not despair too quickly. The PTA, after all, is a typically progressive, modern, nonprofit organization. It is intended chiefly to enlist passive parental consent to the dictates of the scientific education elite, usually through a subtle but powerful process of intimidation and indoctrination. The last thing the PTA is designed to do is to empower parents to govern their own schools. If there is any doubt about this, one need only ask, when was the last time the local PTA challenged any major decision by the school administration or teachers union? That citizens are beginning to drop out of organizations like the PTA does not prove that they are uninterested in self-governance. Indeed, it might be a sign that they are eager for it, but no longer willing to settle for seductive substitutes like the PTA. What some find a reason for pessimism about civil society may in fact be cause for hope.

But there is even greater cause for hope, as the Friendship Club shows. The club was established by individuals who were so radically marginalized that they felt unwelcome even in other inner city recovery groups. They planted it in what seems to be a bleak, civic no-man's-land, long since abandoned by government, business, and the major nonprofits alike. Indeed, it finds itself in some of the harshest social surroundings imaginable, outside a war zone. This might seem like the last place on earth one would expect to find a thriving civic association. But there it is—and here is the ray of hope—not *in spite* of its surroundings, but precisely *because* of its surroundings. Long after the social pathologies of the inner city had baffled and driven out society's bureaucratic experts, its citizens came to realize that they themselves must establish their own enclave within which those forces no longer hold sway.

This was not just the *last* available alternative of desperate people, as it turns out, but the *best* available alternative all along. For the self-governance the club cultivates is precisely the necessary antidote to a toxic environment—an environment that by its very nature cultivates dependency and addiction, the negation of human freedom and personal accountability. Only a true civic association like the Friendship Club can break the chains of dependency in the name of genuine self-governance.

So this is the truly good news about civil society: it is not some delicate and rare flower that blossoms only when the social and economic circumstances are ideal. It is, rather, a tough, hardy perennial that springs up in the flintiest soil after fire has burnt off everything else, and when circumstances seem to be the worst.

If we seek civil society today in its purest and healthiest form, then, we should not be dismayed to find that it is relatively scarce in the most comfortable neighborhoods of America. They remain, by and large, the unchallenged turf of the progressive regime of expertise. We must search for civil society instead in the most hard-pressed and seemingly desolate sectors—at the margins—of our national life. There, the social sciences have conspicuously and undeniably failed, and have fled the field in disarray. There, citizens have no choice but to face their own vulnerability, brokenness, and incompleteness. They are compelled to turn to each incomplete other in order to form a mutually supportive civic community.

From this perspective, even some of the apparent institutional vices of a group like the Friendship Club may be seen rather as subtle democratic virtues. The endless multiplication of and turmoil within committees may not be a sign of dysfunction, but rather the joyous clatter of newly self-governing citizens learning first-hand how to run their own affairs. The schisms and secessions of dissident groups perhaps should not be regarded as mission failure, but rather as the way civil society propagates itself, through endless, tumultuous fission. Even the life crisis the Friendship Club faces today, as once again its dues-paying membership list slips dangerously low, may simply be civil society's way of quietly phasing out groups when they no longer meet the needs of citizens, and replacing them with others that will—an art, incidentally that government and mainstream nonprofits have yet to master. If the Friendship Club should survive this crisis, as I hope it will, it will make for a heartening chapter in the next history of the club's struggle to bring self-governance into a world of dependency. In the meantime, perhaps, we will learn to read the turbulent history of the Friendship Club not as an alarming tale of chaos and failure, but rather as an inspiring story of a healthy and vital self-governing community—a story of genuine American democracy.

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Holy Land Pilgrimage: A Diary

George Weigel

Saturday/Sunday, March 18-19, 2000

It's not quite Egeria's *Diary of a Pilgrimage*, but Evelyn Waugh's *Helena* is terrific reading, or rereading, on an overnight flight to the Holy Land: a resolutely gritty, profoundly anti-Gnostic rendering of Constantine's mother and her search for the true Cross, which, on Waugh's telling of the tale, was driven by the simple, sturdy conviction that the truth of Christianity must be tied to a certain place, a defined time, and real lives. Helena went to the Holy Land, in a word, because of a *sacramental* conviction—that in the Christian scheme of things, salvation history is not merely an idea; rather, the stuff of creation is transformed by grace into the instruments of redemption, right before our eyes. (*Helena* is also, like every other Waugh novel, wickedly funny, which helps on a ten-and-a-half hour flight.)

I don't know whether John Paul II has ever read *Helena*; I rather doubt it. But he's coming to the Holy Land for the same reason Constantine's mother did. As he put it in a June 1999 letter to all those preparing to celebrate the Great Jubilee of 2000, "To go in a spirit of prayer from one place to another, from one city to another, in the area marked especially by God's intervention, helps us not only to live our life as a journey, but also gives us a vivid sense of a God who has gone before us and leads us on, who Himself set out on man's path, a God who does not look down on us from on high, but who became our traveling companion."

That is what the jubilee year is about, and like the dowager empress Helena, John Paul II, the evangelical pilgrim, is determined to remind the world of it—to make the world look, hard, at the stuff of its redemption.

On the drive into Jerusalem from the airport, I was struck by the flags on the lampposts: Vatican and Israeli flags, side-by-side, a sight that many here (and elsewhere) never expected to see. Something epic is afoot.

I haven't been in Jerusalem in nine years and the city has changed, in some cases dramatically. The massive new Mamilla development near the Jaffa Gate, the last of former Mayor Teddy Kollek's great building projects, seems about half-done, and not altogether successful, architecturally or commercially. I walked through it into the Old City, wondering whether I would remember how to get to the Church of the Holy Sepulcher. I did, and here, too, there were changes, notably the new interior dome over the edicule that holds the sepulcher itself. It's a bit garish, in the modern Italian style, but one comes to the Church of the Holy Sepulcher not for the aesthetics, but to pray. And amidst the cacophony of Sunday afternoon tourists and pilgrims it remains perhaps the easiest place in the world to pray: not so much formally, but as a matter of practicing the presence.

Back at the Jerusalem Hilton, overlooking the Old City, my new colleagues of NBC, MSNBC, and New York's WNBC have been transforming the tenth-floor presidential suite into a combination newsroom-and-outdoor studio, and chaos prevails. The local journalistic chatter, two days before the Pope's arrival, is about security. Israel is mounting the largest security operation in its history for the papal pilgrim, dubbed "Operation Old Friend," and the word is that seventy pounds of explosives were found last week in a house controlled by Hamas extremists. Friday's *Jerusalem Post* has a huge picture of a Pope-float being made for a

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Purim parade this week, and I'm told that Pope costumes are a hot item among some young Purim celebrants. Semtex and Pope-floats, ancient shrines and modern flags: welcome to Jerusalem in the year of Our Lord, 2000.

Monday, March 20

Further explorations in the Israeli press and a few phone calls to friends and colleagues suggest that an incredible number of personal, ethnic, religious, ecumenical, interreligious, organizational, and, of course, political agendas are at play in the last twenty-four hours before John Paul arrives. Spin is everywhere. Some upstart local religious leaders are competing for market-share in what they assume will be a growing interreligious dialogue after the visit. The established figures—Jewish, Christian, Muslim—are busy trying to frame the papal visit according to their respective organizational and political agendas. The politicians, by contrast, seem relatively restrained thus far. In one sense, this entire hermeneutical rumble—trying to define what it all means before the Pope even lands—is a tribute to John Paul II, the man whose blessing everyone, or almost everyone, seems to crave. On the other hand, the struggle for interreligious turf, ecumenical precedence, and political advantage misses the essential point of the Pope's visit.

That's what I tried to stress in my first segment on MSNBC today: this is a *pilgrimage*, and like everything else John Paul II does, it has an evangelical purpose. John Paul is not coming to the Holy Land to say to the world, "Look at me"; he's coming to say, "Look at Jesus Christ." I also underlined the deeply personal meaning of this pilgrimage for the Pope. In the first weeks of his pontificate, he had had a bright idea: he should spend his first Christmas as Pope in Bethlehem. Mass consternation ensued among the traditional managers of popes—Bethlehem was in disputed territory; the Holy See didn't have diplomatic relations with any state in the area; the logistics would be impossible on such short notice; popes simply didn't *do* this sort of thing. For one of the few times in twenty-one years, John Paul let his evangelical instincts be trumped by the ingrained cautiousness of his diplomats.

But for years afterwards, he would ask them, whenever the subject turned to the Middle East, *Quando mi permetterete di andare?*—"When will you let me go?" In the 1994 apostolic letter, *Tertio Millennio Adveniente*, he floated the idea of a pilgrimage to the great sites of biblical history: Ur, home of Abraham, father of believers; Mt. Sinai, site of the Covenant and the Ten Commandments; the Holy Land; Damascus, to mark the conversion of St. Paul; Athens and the Areopagus, to recall Paul's sermon on the "unknown God," which John Paul has long thought an apt metaphor for the Church's situation in the modern world. And still those in the Vatican whose professional responsibility it is to fret continued to, well, fret: how could it be arranged, how would he navigate the minefields of Mideast politics, who could make sense of the logistical nightmares? Finally, in that June 1999 letter, the Pope signaled that he had waited long enough, and simply announced that he was going.

The Iraqis blocked the Ur pilgrimage, demanding that the Pope defy the UN's no-fly zones; the Pope settled for a day of "spiritual pilgrimage" at the Vatican, visually centered on Rublev's icon of the angelic visitation to Abraham. Sinai, however, went off beautifully in February, despite some chippiness by the Greek Orthodox leaders at St. Catherine's Monastery, who declined to pray with the Bishop of Rome. Now, tomorrow, John Paul II will be a pilgrim in the Holy Land. And despite my media colleagues' mantra about the "frail and failing pontiff"—I've been arguing that the real story is how much he does at seventy-nine years old with a form of Parkinson's disease and a leg that doesn't work too well—I think it's fitting that he's coming as an old man. Because what will happen here is the existential confirmation of things the Pope has said and written for decades: with obvious effort, he is going to bear witness to what he believes is true, and what he has taught as the truth, about Christianity, its relationship to Judaism, its respect for other world religions, its commitment to human rights, peace, and justice.

I was impressed by my MSNBC colleagues during our first segments working together. They are smart, friendly, and maintain an amazing professional calm amidst what seems to my amateur eye nothing short of bedlam. Chris Jansing, the anchor, is also willing to let her "anchor buddy" (as I'm known in the argot) spin things out for a decent length of time. She understands that this isn't an event whose truth is readily captured in sound-bites—and after months on the road covering presidential politics in Iowa, New Hampshire, South Carolina, Michigan, and elsewhere, I daresay she finds that a relief.

In Amman, where John Paul stopped for a day en route to the Holy Land, the papal Mass was well-attended. The Pope's subsequent meeting with the Jordanian Catholic hierarchy was a reminder of what the term "universal pastor" means. Some bishops in the West may resent the primacy of the Bishop of Rome; for bishops here, trying to keep small churches afloat in a Muslim sea, the universal pastoral responsibility of the Pope is a lifesaver. On a slightly different plane, the Jordanians and the Palestinians in what is

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now Israeli-occupied territory on the West Bank are embroiled in a public controversy over the precise site of Jesus' baptism; one doesn't risk a charge of impiousness by suggesting that the argument has more to do with future tourist dollars than with the fine points of biblical archaeology.

In between MSNBC segments I had dinner with Father Michael McGarry, a graduate school classmate and the director of the Tantur Theological Institute. We went to a Palestinian restaurant, Philadelphia, in East Jerusalem, and while the food was superb, I was reminded during the drive that beyond the Damascus Gate lies a different world—at 7:30 at night it was largely lifeless and virtually empty. A poster in the restaurant displayed a photo of John Paul II and Yassir Arafat superimposed on a photo of Jerusalem, with the headline in English, "Welcome to the Palestinian Holy Land." It was a harbinger of another form of spin and a rather expansive reading of the Oslo peace accords.

Tuesday, March 21

At breakfast this morning I met an immensely learned and kindly rabbi, the friend of an NBC colleague. The rabbi admired John Paul II greatly and asked what I thought the Pope had in mind for the future of Catholic-Jewish relations. I replied that the Pope, while welcoming the achievements of the thirty-five years since Vatican II, now wanted to move the dialogue to a new, theological level. The rabbi became obviously uncomfortable. When I asked whether I had just heard alarm bells going off in his mind, he smiled and said that indeed I had. When I asked why, he said he thought that the kind of theologically enriched, religiously focused dialogue John Paul II envisioned was simply impossible. When I asked why that was the case he replied, simply and without rancor, "Because your sacred text is anti-Semitic."

The obvious next question was what *that* meant, and my interlocutor cited the Gospel of John and its multiple references to "the Jews" in their confrontation with Jesus. I replied that two hundred years of New Testament scholarship had demonstrated that many of the Gospel accounts were written in the polemical context of a bitter family feud, one that eventually led to the parting of the ways between what became Christianity and what became rabbinic Judaism. Moreover, I suggested, the phrase "the Jews" in John's Gospel simply couldn't be read as if this were the minutes of a blackballing at a 1928 meeting in an upscale New York men's club. The rabbi seemed struck by this formulation, but then said that, while he accepted what I had just reported, surely this was not the way the majority of Catholics read the New Testament. I assured him that, when the people of my suburban Washington parish heard "the Jews" during the Good Friday liturgy, they were not hearing what he feared they heard.

This conversation gave personal texture to some polling data I had been reading before and after my arrival in Jerusalem. Fifty-six percent of Israelis, one poll reported, have no idea that the Catholic Church publicly condemns anti-Semitism and works against it. Very few understand the change in the Catholic relationship to Judaism since Vatican II. Several local Jewish leaders have suggested that Jewish ignorance about Christianity is a scandal and an impediment to interfaith relations that can no longer go unaddressed. This, I suspect, has been a problem for years, but it's a side benefit of the papal visit that these things can now be said publicly. The Anti-Defamation League, to its great credit, took out two-page ads in several Israeli papers yesterday, letting the Pope speak for himself in a series of quotable quotes on Jews, Judaism, the abiding covenant with the Jewish people, the State of Israel, and the Holocaust. These citations are a welcome addition to the mix, but that it had to be done tells us something about the imperatives of the immediate future—and not just in Israel.

When the Pope's Royal Jordanian Airbus landed at Ben-Gurion Airport this afternoon, the arrival ceremony confirmed what those flags on the Jerusalem lampposts had suggested: this will be a week of icons. The Pope waving a hand in salute at the Israeli flag; the Pope listening attentively as "Hatikvah," Israel's national anthem, is played; the Pope being welcomed to the Jewish state as an honored guest by its president and prime minister; the Pope reviewing an Israeli Defense Force honor guard—these are very powerful signals for John Paul's Jewish interlocutors that things have changed, dramatically, in Catholic-Jewish relations. What the Pope and Israeli President Ezer Weizmann said was fine (although there will certainly be discussion in the future about Weizmann's blunt political reference to Jerusalem as Israel's eternal capital). But the iconography was crucial. The Pope has been saying things about Jews and Catholics for two decades. These images are confirming that what was said was what was meant.

Wednesday, March 22

John Paul spent the entire day in Bethlehem, now under the control of the Palestinian Authority (the "PA," as everyone here calls it), and at the Dehaishe refugee camp. In an interview yesterday with Tom Brokaw, Arafat had insisted, again, that St. Peter was a

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"Palestinian." I remarked to a colleague that that was true, in the sense that Rabbi Gamaliel and Rabbi Akiba were "Palestinians," but I didn't think that this was the point Arafat was trying to make.

It was, however, the first episode in what became a day-long effort to use the Pope's presence in the PA for the PLO's political purposes. John Paul's measured (and Vatican-standard) remarks about the importance of a Palestinian "homeland" were immediately translated by Suha Arafat, wife of the PLO chairman, into a "clear message for an independent Palestinian state" (although the word "state" did not appear in the Pope's text—deliberately, as I later learned). The papal call for justice for the refugees at the Dehaishe camp was quickly spun by Palestinian commentators into a Vatican demand for a "right of return" for all those displaced by the first Arab-Israeli War in 1948 (although the phrase "right of return" was not used, again deliberately). Arafat himself got the day off to a politicized start by welcoming the Pope to Palestine "and to holy Jerusalem, the eternal capital of Palestine." The tangled question of Jerusalem's international legal status and future notwithstanding, this claim for a city that has never been the capital of an Islamic state was of a piece with Arafat's overreach on the "Palestinian St. Peter" and his 1995 Christmas reference to Bethlehem as the city of the "Palestinian Jesus."

It's difficult for reporters accustomed to covering political stories to understand that, when the Pope speaks of justice and human rights, he's speaking as a pastor, not as a politician or negotiator. Then there was a mild flap over the Pope's kissing a bowl of Palestinian soil on his arrival in Bethlehem: did this mean he was recognizing a Palestinian state (as the PA spin machine quickly insisted)? Joaquín Navarro-Valls, the Pope's able press spokesman, ended that line of speculation with a simple statement: "It would have been very strange of the Pope not to have kissed the earth at the place where Christ was born."

Moreover, the Pope's words about justice for a Palestinian people whose "torment is before the eyes of the world" and had "gone on too long" were just as plausibly aimed at the leadership of the Palestinian Authority as well as at other states in the region. The PA is a mess. The economy is a shambles and corruption is rampant; one of our camera crews, in order to shoot film in Bethlehem, had to get ten different press passes, meaning that ten different PA officials or offices had to be paid off. Christians can't buy land or other forms of property in the PA—not by law, but because it's simply not done, and it's well understood that any attempt to do so will bring retribution. So the economic pressure on Palestinian Christians increases steadily, leading to further Christian migration from the Holy Land, a major Vatican concern. The large-scale corruption in the PA was also, I suspect, on the Pope's mind when he spoke at Dehaishe: corruption is not simply lining the pockets of PA officials, it's blocking any serious economic development efforts for these refugees. Whatever signals it may have sent politically, however, the papal visit to the camp was an enormous success in human terms. One relief official told a visiting American bishop that the Pope's presence had given the refugees a measure of hope for the first time in decades.

One has to feel terribly sorry for ordinary Palestinians. Pawns of other Arab states' anti-Israeli politics for years, but now on the verge of achieving a state of their own (which everyone I talked to expects to be declared this year), they are saddled with a mendacious, corrupt, and inept political leadership. The day-long PA spin control operation sat poorly with a lot of the press and with Holy See officials who have been insisting that this is a *pilgrimage*. The condition of Christians in the PA also puts the recent Vatican/Palestinian agreement in the proper perspective: by insisting on a religious freedom provision in the agreement (a clause the PA first resisted, but on which the Vatican dug in its heels), the Holy See has created a legal situation in which it can be of some assistance to Palestinian Catholics when the Palestinian state, which will likely be unfriendly to them in various ways, is a fact.

In the midst of the Palestinian spin, Israeli counterspin, and Vatican aggravation at PA hamhandedness, John Paul's wonderful homily in Bethlehem got little attention. "The joy announced by the angel" to the shepherds of Bethlehem "is not a thing of the past," the Pope said. "It is a joy of today—the eternal today of God's salvation which embraces all time, past, present, and future. At the dawn of the new millennium, we are called to see more clearly that time has meaning because here Eternity entered history and remains with us forever. . . . Because it is always Christmas in Bethlehem, every day is Christmas in the hearts of Christians."

This afternoon, a WNBC reporter told me that the Israeli government had confirmed that its security people had asked the Pope to wear a bulletproof vest in Nazareth and he had refused. What did I make of this? I said that something similar had been proposed after the assassination attempt in 1981 and had met with the same response. This was not, I told the New York audience, papal chutzpah; it was religious conviction. Karol Wojtyla has believed for more than six decades that he is not in charge of his own life. To wear a bulletproof vest would be to deny the conviction that makes him who and what he is—the convic-

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tion that God is in charge of his life, which is the source of John Paul's fearlessness and freedom. The Pope is, of course, heavily protected by police and other security forces. What local authorities do to avoid having a wounded or dead Pope on their hands is beyond his control.

Thursday, March 23

This was a day of solemn drama and wrenching emotion. It began with a private Mass for the papal party in the Cenacle, the "Upper Room"—the successor of Peter and his collaborators concelebrating at the traditional site of the institution of the Eucharist and the priesthood, the place where the Church was born on Pentecost. Then, after a meeting with the chief Ashkenazic rabbi, Yisrael Meir Lau, and the chief Sephardic rabbi, Eliahu Bakshi-Doron, the Pope went to the Israeli presidential residence for a conversation with President Weizmann. And from there, John Paul II was driven to the Holocaust memorial at Yad Vashem.

This unforgettable visit was preceded by weeks of speculation and agitation: "How far would the Pope go?" Attempts to explain that this was not a zero-sum negotiation in which one side's gain was another's loss got little traction amidst the rhetorical grenades being freely tossed about. A few weeks before the papal pilgrimage, Rabbi Arthur Hertzberg had told an Israeli audience that Karol Wojtyla had been passively acquiescent during the wartime slaughter of Polish Jewry. A little later, James Carroll had lectured at David Hartman's Jerusalem institute, arguing that the real issue here was to jettison the "theology" that had "made the Holocaust possible"—presumably a reference to Carroll's bizarre notion, first floated in the *New Yorker*, that Vatican I's definition of papal infallibility had caused the Shoah. More sober souls, among them the ADL's David Rosen, have been quietly explaining in recent days that a papal "apology" for Pius XII is simply not in the cards. But what has gone largely unexamined is the question of how a playwright's undocumented speculation—Pius XII's alleged indifference to the Holocaust as portrayed by Rolf Hochhuth in *The Deputy*—has become, in many minds, a *given*.

It was not an atmosphere that seemed appropriate to the seriousness of the papal pilgrimage or the gravity of what Yad Vashem represents, and concerns were expressed yesterday and this morning that the entire visit could self-destruct today. In the event, however, John Paul took all of this to an entirely different level in a simple ceremony of awesome solemnity that reduced to ashes the endless "how far" chatter.

Joaquín Navarro-Valls once asked John Paul whether he ever cried. "Not outside," the Pope replied. No one who knows him could doubt that the Pope was crying inside as he walked slowly toward the eternal flame in Yad Vashem's Hall of Remembrance and then bent his head in silent prayer. No one could doubt that, in his mind's eye, he was seeing the boyhood friends from Wadowice who had perished in the death camps. No one who knows how the experience of the Nazi Occupation had shaped Karol Wojtyla's determination to defend human dignity could doubt that he was hearing the jackboots on the streets of Cracow again.

The Pope, a shared history etched in his face, bent in prayer over the eternal flame at Yad Vashem—here was the second icon indelibly imprinted on the memory of the modern world and on the consciousness of Catholics and Jews. Here was another indication that things could never be the same again.

John Paul began his brief address with Psalm 131 ("I have become like a broken vessel. . . . But I trust in you, O Lord") and then said what ought to have been said to so many of those trying to spin the papal visit to Yad Vashem before the Pope had even arrived: "In this place of memories, the mind and heart and soul feel an extreme need for silence. Silence in which to remember. Silence in which to try to make some sense of the memories which come flooding back. Silence because there are no words strong enough to deplore the terrible tragedy of the Shoah."

Then, after reminding everyone that remembrance was "*for a purpose*, namely, to ensure that never again will evil prevail, as it did for the millions of innocent victims of Nazism," John Paul, knowing that too many Christians had become ensnared in that web of evil, offered an act of repentance from the heart: "As Bishop of Rome and Successor of the Apostle Peter, I assure the Jewish people that the Catholic Church, motivated by the gospel law of love and by no political considerations, is deeply saddened by the hatred, acts of persecution, and displays of anti-Semitism directed against the Jews by Christians at any time and in any place." Most especially including, it was clear, the times and places memorialized at Yad Vashem. Prime Minister Ehud Barak replied with a moving statement that neither ignored nor pursued the arguments about relative responsibilities for the Shoah; like the Pope, the prime minister understood that this was too solemn a moment for anything other than remembrance and a mutual commitment to a different future.

The weight of history became almost unbearable when the Pope walked slowly across the Hall of Remembrance to greet seven Holocaust survivors. But

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here, too, it seemed, was another icon: the Pope was not receiving the survivors, he was honoring their experience and their memories by walking, with difficulty, to meet them. It was a gesture of respect that did not go unnoticed or unremarked. Our NBC/MSNBC newsroom and studio, which was usually a bedlam eighteen hours a day, fell completely silent.

A few days later, an Israeli friend, a soldier-intellectual who has seen a lot in his life, called late at night. "I just had to tell you," he said, "that my wife and I cried throughout the Pope's visit to Yad Vashem. This was wisdom, humaneness, and integrity personified. Nothing was missing; nothing more needed to be said."

Later that afternoon, a tripartite interreligious meeting, on which John Paul had insisted, illustrated just how difficult "the dialogue" is, in and around Jerusalem. The Grand Mufti of Jerusalem had refused to participate; Chairman Arafat had delegated Sheik Taysir Tamimi, an Islamic judge from the PA, to be the Muslim spokesman. Tamimi and Rabbi Lau flanked the Pope on a dais at the Pontifical Notre Dame Institute. Lau began by speaking of the need for peace and dialogue in everyday life; then, as the *New York Times*' Alessandra Stanley wrote, he "put an abrupt end to both by thanking John Paul for 'your recognition of Jerusalem as [Israel's] united, eternal capital city.'" The Pope had not done that—the Holy See, which takes no position on the question of sovereignty in Jerusalem, nevertheless insists that access to the city's holy places and their integrity be secured by an "international statute"—and someone in the audience shouted, "The Pope did not recognize Jerusalem." Things got more volatile when Tamimi welcomed the Pope, in Arabic, as "the guest of the Palestinian people on the land of Palestine, in the city of holy Jerusalem, eternal capital of Palestine," and was met by loud applause by the audience. He went on to insist, in a rather frenzied rhetorical style, that there could be no peace in the region until all of "Palestine" was united under "President Yassir Arafat"; more applause followed. The moderator, Rabbi Alon Goshen-Gottstein, tried to save the meeting by reminding those present that they were supposed to have come "as religious people who can put aside our politics." John Paul spoke briefly and pointedly of religion as "the enemy of exclusion and discrimination, of hatred and rivalry, of violence and conflict," but shortly after he finished, Sheik Tamimi abruptly got up and left the meeting. It was later explained by a Vatican official that the sheik had leaned over to the Pope before departing and explained that he had a "previous engagement." One had to wonder precisely what engagement trumped the Pope in the sheik's mind.

Friday, March 24

I managed to get away for a couple of hours of pilgrim-time this morning: the Cenacle, the Dormition Abbey, the Holy Sepulcher again. Walking through the Old City from Zion Gate through the Jewish Quarter to the Christian Quarter, I couldn't help noticing the ubiquitous cell phones and the refreshing number of black faces, the result of the ingathering of Ethiopian Jews.

The papal Mass at Korazim today, on the Mount of Beatitudes, was the largest gathering in the history of the State of Israel: over 100,000 young people, from all over the world, in a kind of mini-World Youth Day. A local news agency reported that a bulletproof screen had been erected around the altar platform, noting that this was the first time this had been done at a papal Mass "since Detroit in 1987"—which is no compliment, I suppose, to Korazim. The Pope was in fine form, voice strong and clear, as he so often is with teenagers. Why, WNBC asked, did they find him so attractive? Because, I suggested, he didn't pander to them but challenged them to moral heroism. John Paul's own "sermon on the mount" also asked the youngsters to be "joyful witnesses and convinced apostles," the evangelists of the twenty-first century. A television producer for a network that will go unnamed asked me, "How long has the Catholic Church been into evangelism?" "About nineteen hundred and sixty-five years," I replied.

After the Mass, John Paul went to Tabgha, to pray at the site of the multiplication of loaves and fishes, and then to Peter's house at Capernaum, which has been excavated in recent years. One could sense the wonder in John Paul's face: here was Peter's 263rd successor, praying at Peter's house. One also got the distinct impression here, as at Bethlehem (where the Pope managed to be by himself for a few minutes in the Grotto of the Nativity), that the best moments of this trip for John Paul are the moments when he can be a pilgrim and simply pray. They are, necessarily, fewer than he would like. But they are unmistakably intense.

Saturday, March 25

John Paul II celebrated the Solemnity of the Annunciation today at the traditional site of the angel Gabriel's appearance to Mary of Nazareth. This part of the pilgrimage had been preceded by high tension. An incomprehensible decision by the Israeli government to grant a permit for the building of a mosque in the plaza outside the Basilica of the Annunciation had led to riots and festering ill will. The mosque decision—which, as one Vatican official

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put it privately, would lay the basilica under "permanent siege"—remains under review and the Holy See is determined to reverse it. For today, however, this controversy was not the center of local attention. John Paul was almost crushed by the exultant congregation as he walked into the basilica; his secretary, the ever-calm Bishop Stanislaw Dziwisz, fended off hands trying to touch the Pope from left and right by a judicious distribution of rosaries. Once again, the beauty of the liturgy and its location notwithstanding, John Paul was clearly most at home when he managed some time for private prayer in the Grotto of the Annunciation, doubtless repeating the *Fiat voluntas tua* that has characterized his own life and Marian spirituality.

Later today, on MSNBC, Rabbi James Rudin of the American Jewish Committee took on the question of whether the Pope should wear his pectoral cross when he visits the Western Wall tomorrow—the latest local controversy, it seems. Rudin was perfect. In "real interreligious dialogue," he said, "we respect the other for what he is and we begin the conversation from there." Off camera, Rudin told me that the same issue had come up when plans were being finalized for John Paul's historic visit to the Synagogue of Rome in 1986. There, it seemed, the proscription on crosses is so severe that ushers would walk through the congregation and rap the knees of anyone caught crossing their legs. Chief Rabbi Elio Toaff was beseeched by some of his congregants to explain the situation to the Pope and ask him not to wear his pectoral cross. Toaff agreed, and went to see the Pope. John Paul said, in so many words, "Look, if I were coming to the Synagogue of Rome as a tourist I'd be happy to wear jeans. But I'm coming as the Bishop of Rome and the universal pastor of the Catholic Church, and to make that and all it means unmistakably clear I have to dress as I always do." Toaff came out of the meeting and told his startled followers that he had indeed raised the point with the Pope and they had both agreed: the Pope should wear his pectoral cross.

While the Pope was lost in prayer this evening at the Church of the Nations in the Garden of Gethsemane, Father Mike McGarry celebrated Mass for the MSNBC Catholics in our own "upper room"—in this instance, my quarters at the Jerusalem Hilton. Leaving Gethsemane, John Paul called on the Greek Orthodox patriarch, Diodoros I, at his residence. What could have resulted in another unpleasant ecumenical scene was transformed when the Pope embraced and kissed the ailing patriarch, who remained seated. John Paul insisted that "only by being reconciled among themselves can Christians play their role in making Jerusalem a city of peace for all people." The Pope then spontaneously proposed that all those present say the Lord's Prayer together, each in his own language. By coming to Diodoros, John Paul lived out the truth of what he had suggested in *Ut Unum Sint* and elsewhere: that he really burns to pray with the Orthodox, and that he doesn't imagine the Bishop of Rome playing the jurisdictional role in the East that he currently does in the West.

Sunday, March 26

John Paul II, walking eighty-six slow steps to the Western Wall this morning, praying there, and, like millions of pious Jews, leaving behind a prayer-petition: here was the third great icon for the future of the Catholic-Jewish dialogue. The letter the Pope left repeated what had been said at the liturgical "cleansing of the Church's conscience" in Rome on the First Sunday of Lent—"God of our fathers, you chose Abraham and his descendants to bring your name to the nations. We are deeply saddened by the behavior of those who in the course of history have caused these children of yours to suffer. And asking your forgiveness, we wish to commit ourselves to genuine brotherhood with the people of the covenant." But now it was being said *here*, in this singular place, by a man whose reverence for that place could be read in his whole demeanor. It was another image driving home the point that something fundamental had changed, irreversibly, in the relationship between Catholicism and living Judaism.

Prior to this, John Paul had visited the Haram al-Sharif, the Temple Mount, where he met a delegation of Muslim leaders. The Grand Mufti, Sheik Ikrima Sabri, read the Pope a lecture and told him bluntly that Jerusalem is "eternally bonded to Islam." According to papal spokesman Navarro-Valls, the Pope was unaware that the Mufti had been engaging in Holocaust denial and Jew-baiting in a series of interviews during the weekend. John Paul's response to the Mufti's lecture, that he considered Jerusalem the "holy city par excellence" and "a part of the common patrimony" of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam, did not seem to make much impression on the Mufti's politicized supersessionism.

From the Pope's point of view, the Mass at the Holy Sepulcher, which he celebrated after his visit to the Western Wall, was the climax of the entire pilgrimage. Here, he had written in his June 1999 letter, "I intend to immerse myself in prayer bearing in my heart the whole Church." As it happened, John Paul was not satisfied with one immersion in prayer during that Eucharist at the tomb of Christ. Later in the day, he asked to be permitted to come back, privately, and

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after the security people had recovered from the shock, the Pope spent another half-hour as a pilgrim, not only at the tomb, but climbing up the difficult stone steps to the eleventh and twelfth Stations of the Cross, in order to be able to pray at Calvary. It was another icon, the Pope living out the truth to which he had committed himself decades before: Jesus Christ as the answer to the question that is every human life.

As John Paul's El Al 747 took off from Ben-Gurion Airport this evening, I couldn't help recall what one Jerusalem interreligious leader had called, a week ago, "the growing unease about the chances of [the Pope's] success." Yet John Paul had done it again. By being what he had said all along he intended to be—a pilgrim—he lifted the entire week above the quarrels, conflicts, hatreds, and pettiness that are the daily bread of affliction in the Holy Land. What a remarkable thing it was, one television colleague said, to see an adult among the squabbling children of the Middle East. But more than maturity has been on display here for the past seven days. The Pope drew the response he did because of his transparent faith.

The effects of this pilgrimage will likely be enduring, perhaps even epic. The sea change in Catholic-Jewish relations has been registered by people who may have heard something about it previously, but have now seen it embodied. One can only hope that the Palestinian people, seeing what mature leadership looks like, will be able to demand it of their own leaders. As for the impact on the Catholic Church, I'd venture the guess that this pilgrimage will, one day, loom large in the deliberations of the conclave that chooses John Paul's successor—many years from now, I devoutly hope. Even as the Pope was walking in the footsteps of Christ in Galilee and Judea, middle-level curial bureaucrats and disgruntled liberal Catholic intellectuals were putting out the word to the press that the next Pope would be an elderly Italian. But surely, after this week, something else has been decisively clarified. The overriding question in the next conclave will not be, "Where was so-and-so born?" It will have to be, "Who can offer the world the kind of leadership we saw in Jerusalem in March 2000?" FT

Morning Haiku

Morning tea: the steam
is filled with a holy ghost.
Sunlight floods the room.

Morning light comes down
through the cross-patterned window.
Eyes half-closed, in shade,

I lift up my eyes
to the cross-shadowed morning.
Orisons, arise.

Craig Payne

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The Godlessness that Failed

Michael Novak

The collapse of communism in 1989 was one of the greatest events of human history—one of the most sudden, unexpected, dramatic, and utterly transformative. We are too close to it to be certain how to read it. Yet one characteristic of communism proved to be decisive—its particular form of atheism, and the effect of this atheism upon the morale of the people and upon their economic performance.

For seventy-two years, communism in Russia waged a silent war against the human soul. Sometimes screams were heard from torture chambers deep in prisons and in detention centers, but mostly the war was fought with ideas and incessant public propaganda. Below the surface, it eroded foundations. Out of sight, it taught people to have a low opinion of themselves, as if they were incapable of nobility of soul. It ridiculed the soul's capacity for discernment and for truth. Year after year, the silent artillery of communism leveled the inner landscapes of the soul.

A more secular way to speak of these things is to say that communism set out to destroy human capital. It set out, for instance, to eradicate centuries of learning, habits, cultures—to erase "bourgeois culture," to salt it and plow it under with lies, demonstrations, propaganda. In doing so it destroyed enterprise, investment, innovation, even the ability to distinguish between profit and loss. It wounded the habits of honesty and trust, self-reliance and fidelity to one's word. More deeply still, it dulled the most distinctive human mark: the soul's primordial endowment of creativity, its sense of personal responsibility, its knowledge of itself as a *subject.*

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The denial of the dignity of the individual, the reduction of the human being to merely material elements, erases our awareness of ourselves as persons who reflect and who choose, who launch new and creative actions into history, and who accept responsibility for our actions. Unlike a horse or a cow, a human being is an acting person, an active agent—inquiring and understanding, deliberating, judging, deciding. In precisely these ways, a human is made in the image of God.

Communism aimed to objectify everything and everybody. Its fundamental premise was materialism. Human beings are—meat. Animated for a time, perhaps, but essentially no more than a *sachetto* of chemicals. Instruments. Means. The "dialectical" part of "dialectical materialism" belonged to a dynamic class position of "the proletariat." The "materialist" part belonged to the people. The individual should *expect* to be expended, sacrificed, used up, like a thing.

Sacrificed—in this last respect, communism traded on the symbolism of Judaism and Christianity: the expectation of a New Jerusalem and the sacrifice of self for others. Communism's materialistic theory, in and of itself, had no such resonance. Mere things do not make sacrifices for noble purposes or consider sacrifice a noble act. Thus, communism's deepest sentiments were borrowed.

It is well known that belief in God can lead to torture, as in the awful scrutinies of heresy tribunals. It is less well known that atheism of a particular kind also leads to torture. The two routes to torture are quite different. The temptation of believers comes from moral arrogance or its mirror image, as in the case of Dostoevsky's Grand Inquisitor, who was moved to torture by "pity," a foolish belief that most people are not as wise as he, so that it was his "duty" to keep them

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from liberty. This route begins in moral debility. With atheists of the Communist kind it is quite different. Here torture flows from its fundamental premises about the human being. No human has any worth apart from contributing to the Cause—to the Dialectic, to the triumph of the Party (the Vanguard of History, the Custodian of human fate). If a man will not contribute willingly to History or (it comes to the same thing) the Collective Will of the Party, he is without value and may be disposed of—indeed, is a threat to the Party, and *should* be disposed of.

Communist atheism denies any transcendent dimension to being, any call to which humans must freely respond, any standard of truth, evidence, moral integrity, and goodness by which humans are every moment being judged. For the Communist, all is nothingness except the Dialectic of History, before which and in whose name he prostrates himself. The Communist borrows from Christianity and Judaism a comfort, viz., that his prostration places him on the side of justice and compassion. Yet his comfort is unwarranted because it rests on ideas in which his premises forbid him to believe. For the Communist has only one moral principle: the Collective Will of the Party. All else can be done in that name: murder, torture, imprison, exterminate, assassinate. No other moral question can be scientifically raised. There is in man no internal source of dignity. Personal liberty and personal responsibility cannot be honored in theory, although of course they continued to live on among individuals. In theory, these realities are dismissed as bourgeois affectations. The Communist's moral comforts are stolen from elsewhere.

Paradoxically, however, the Communist system of imprisonment, torture, and public confession constituted, despite itself, a *via negativa* that led a great many of its victims to God, and to a fresh sense of being an *individual* who possesses *dignity*. For under torture they discovered evidence for the presence of God at the core of their own being. The prison literature of our time is full of such instances.

The typical pattern, if I am not mistaken, went something like this. The KGB handbooks listed more than twenty different degrees of torture, more or less scientifically studied and refined. At some point in the proceedings, the torturer would tell his victim that there is no point in resisting, so why put everybody through the pain? "No one will ever know what happens here. It has no significance. Neither resistance nor confession, really, will affect the outcome of History. Just be pragmatic. Tell me what I wish, write what I request, and do it sooner rather than later. Why not? Bourgeois prejudices? You are too intelligent for that. No one is ever going to know what you or I do here. It will be locked up in files with millions of other files, and a thousand years from now when Socialism is truly consolidated, people will never even notice. Consider yourself a forgotten man. Be practical. There is no such thing as truth. It is only a matter of making a decision. It is a matter of will. Write down what you know is fact. I will even help you. The sooner I can go home the better for me—and for you. It is a matter of will. Be practical."

And then the light would go on in the victim's head: my torturer is telling me that he has all the power. But he is actually confessing something else. There is something he wants from me that he does not have. So he does not have *all* the power. What he needs is this: that I should conform. He needs my will. He needs my denial that there is any such thing as truth. Only then will his philosophy be confirmed.

As long as I remain faithful to my own intellect and will, as long as I refuse to be complicit in his lie, then my existence unsettles him. *I will not tell a lie.* As long as I can hold out for that principle, then my existence shows him that his philosophy is false.

Of course, he will overpower me. He can break me with pain. He can take away my mind and my liberty with drugs. But the real power in this relationship is mine. He cannot get what he wants unless I freely give it to him. It is not enough for him to force me, to destroy me—that would be only an instant's work. I am totally in his power—except for the sanctuary of my consciousness, my fidelity to the light. He will strip me of everything but honesty and naked will. These I cannot give him. He will have to destroy me, and then he cannot have them. Death is now my friend. I will be no use to him—or his precious Party—dead.

Along this way, very much like the way that St. John of the Cross marked out in *The Dark Night of the Soul*, thousands of victims came to know themselves at a depth they had never experienced before. They began to distinguish among the movements of their own souls—memory, imagination, desire, dread, understanding, will.

Moreover, when their bodies ached with pain from beatings, and from the application of electrical current, and from being contorted and held for hours in positions of excruciating pain, they learned something else. They learned that the light inside themselves, to which they were trying to be faithful, the light of truth (or at least, the will not to be complicit in a lie), cannot properly be said to be *part of themselves.* Their initial sense, of course, was that they were being faithful to themselves, clinging to their own minds and wills. When the pain becomes intense enough, however, one sees that one is not really suffering this for oneself. If that were so, why would one not just surrender

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and make the pain go away? Why wouldn't one be pragmatic?

Rather, it seemed as though, in being faithful to the truth, and in calling up his stubborn courage of will, a man was answering to something that did not belong to himself, something that called (although it had no voice) from outside his own mind and will, something at any rate not reducible to his own mind. His own mind and will were focused in a direction running contrary to everything good for his body and his comfort and his peace. But why? Why was he running from his own self-interest, narrowly considered?

On the matter of self-interest, his torturer was certainly correct. In fact, the torturer's insistence on self-interest suggested the one line of thought that explained why the torturer was wrong.

The light in my mind (before which I am trying to be honest) is, as it were, something I *participate* in, and it is not reducible to me. This light approves of my liberty and grows brighter with my own acts of responsibility to it. This light seems very like what people mean—the people an atheist couldn't earlier understand—when they speak of God. And yet (as St. John of the Cross insists) in the place where we would like God to be, "no one appears." Only silence. Emptiness. Nothingness. Yet from emptiness strength emanates, and from it one feels constantly stronger. And more comforted, despite the wracking pain and weariness and tedium, than by anything one has ever before experienced. And one feels *true*.

In the *via negativa*, the voyager sees nothing, hears no divine voices, feels no mystic "presence." As it were, he has before him no more "evidence" concerning God than he did when he called himself an atheist. But he can no longer call himself that. He has come to know that he is no longer accurately described as an atheist. He has been led to the threshold where God dwells, by a dark and obscure knowledge that carries with it a warrant unmistakable to those who have participated in it. He may or may not be ready to say that he believes in "God," but now he has had the experiences that allow him to know what others have been talking about. Not that these are "experiences" that can be isolated, or that they are a kind of "special knowledge" given to some but not to others. They are, rather, something simpler.

In the act of fidelity to the light—the resolve not willingly to be complicit in a lie—a man has become aware of a dimension of his being he had never glimpsed before in such stark clarity. In this awareness, he is aware of a powerful personal dignity. What impresses him is its inalienability. Unless he is simply destroyed, it cannot be taken away from him without his consent. It is true that later he may weaken and give in. But he does not have to fight *later*, only now. He needs only to concentrate during this staccato second, one second at a time, on the dark light within.

The fall of communism forces us to confront one of the deepest lessons to be gleaned from a seventy-year plague upon the human race. Even in the emptiness, the sheer willingness not to turn away from the light, not to be complicit in a lie, leads to an experience of the emptiness in which God darkly dwells. Receptivity is all. It is as though our inquiring hearts are already God-shaped, formed in His image, so that when we try to be honest and brave, try to be true to ourselves, that effort is already a form of participation.

Before communism collapsed in 1989, it had also targeted its silent artillery on the human capital of its people, especially the human capital that suited them for personal economic initiative. In defining the nature of capitalism, however, Karl Marx made an egregious mistake. He thought that capitalism is constituted by three institutional arrangements: 1) private property; 2) a market system of exchange; and 3) the private accumulation of profit. These three institutions, however, are all *pre*-capitalist. They are found in biblical times (and even earlier), whereas scholars hold that "capitalism" is something very new, modern in fact, and quite different from the traditional system based on private property, markets, and profit. Max Weber dated the birth of capitalism after the Protestant Reformation (also a mistake, but indicative of the timing). During the eighteenth century, Adam Smith, David Hume, and others in Scotland and England were arguing for a *new* system, the defining dynamic of which was to be *invention* and *enterprise*. Capitalism applied imagination and practical intelligence to creating new goods and services not provided by earlier systems, agrarian, feudal, and mercantile.

Capitalism is most of all a set of human habits—virtues, in the old-fashioned sense, natural and learned dispositions. The virtue of enterprise consists in both an intellectual habit and a moral habit. The intellectual habit is to *notice*, often before others do, new creative economic opportunities, new goods to create or new ways to create them; to *innovate*; to *invent*. The moral habit is to have the realism, the practicality, the know-how, and the stubborn obstinacy to turn ideas into realities; that is, *to make ideas work*. Not everybody who has one of these two habits has the other. Enterprise requires both. Enterprise is not unlike the creative habit of the artist, who also makes to be what never was. Business leaders are not infrequently as vainglorious about their creations as any prima donna.

As David Landes of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology makes clear in his 1998 study of econom-

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ic history, *The Wealth and Poverty of Nations,* one main cause of the economic leadership of the West lies in the "joy of discovery" taught to Jews and Christians through the teaching that each woman and each man is made in the image of God, the Creator, and is called to be a creator, too. It goes without saying that communism tried to eradicate this image in the human soul, and to strip away from society every social support that over the ages had been brought to its flourishing. Economic initiative was forbidden. The good Socialist was expected to be receptive to the Collective Will and to submerge individual creativity within it. Private property was abolished. (As late as 1986, along the banks of the dark river in the center of Moscow, huge red letters blazed at night: THE ESSENCE OF SOCIALISM IS THE ABOLITION OF PRIVATE PROPERTY.) The system of market exchange was replaced with a system of national planning, in which each month bureaucrats set the prices for more than twenty million different items, with no reference to the costs, desires, or efforts expended by individual buyers or sellers. (The epistemic problems were insoluble, as Ludwig von Mises had predicted in the 1920s.) As if that weren't bad enough, communism cut the tie between economic effort and reward. It forbade private accumulation, and settled instead for rewarding its faithful with political favors (including living quarters, dachas, automobiles, and "official" stores).

Communism furthermore set out to abolish the ancient traditions, customs, and habits of law and morality. It wanted to dirty, distort, and bury the past so that it would be irrecoverable. It tried desperately to replace "bourgeois morality" (in reality, the morality of Judaism and Christianity, more dear to the poor perhaps than to the affluent) with "Socialist morality," in which the human person is never an end but always a means. It taught disregard for critical thinking, personal judgment, and a love for truth in order to make room for Party ideology and propaganda.

As a final affront, it withheld even the simplest goods—toilet paper, meat, oranges—so that humble citizens would have to spend hours in line every week just in order to live. In this way, they might come to feel grateful for the smallest of triumphs. They would also learn to hold themselves in contempt, as unworthy of anything at all except what was allotted to them. Shortages demean people, and communism used them as a means of social control. "Being" is not reducible to "having"; but a human being has a right to personal property, in order to be free to act. The "abolition of private property" was an abolition both of freedom and of dignity.

Thus it is that today the legal and moral traditions of Russia are a shambles. The human capital built up over centuries of religious and humanistic striving was bleached out of each successive generation—one, two, three, four generations in all—and nothing was put in its place but cynicism. Means and ends. Instrumentalism.

Few commentators have noticed this aspect of Communist destructiveness. In destroying the heritage of religion and law, and in destroying the very idea of evidence-based truth, communism destroyed the social capital on which all human progress in liberty depends. Even in a society where liberty is vital and strong, it takes a degree of heroism to act virtuously when others are not doing so. When the whole society frustrates your actions at every turn, it seems futile to act virtuously, and one must struggle daily against the temptation to despair.

Western economists themselves often take the moral and cultural sphere too much for granted. Jennifer Roback of George Mason University describes an American couple who adopted a young boy of three or so from Romania, one of those orphans brought up mass-production style, never held in human arms, fed by a bottle put in place by a mechanical apparatus. Isolated from human closeness with adults until he left the orphanage, the child is grown to young manhood now, handsome, smart, charming—but absolutely incapable of forming a human relationship, capable only of seeking his own will and his own pleasure. He fears close contact with people, only pretending to affection so far as is necessary. Cleverly narcissistic, he lies, steals, cheats—whatever he needs to do to obtain whatever he desires. And all the while, smiling, he charms people by his seemingly open manner. He has already been arrested once for shoplifting, and his teachers at school, for a time in love with him, have reluctantly had to report the times he has stolen things from his classmates.

Professor Roback suggests that the totally self-centered impulse that moves this child, the total preoccupation with his own physical self-interest at the expense of all other more noble interests, sounds remarkably like what the economists conventionally discuss as "economic self-interest." She has challenged other economists to tell her in what respect the conduct of this warped and totally narcissistic young man differs from the behavior of their theoretical "economic man." This challenge infuriates the economists, she has found, but they only sputter and do not answer it.

When they have had time to reflect upon it, however, they may realize that the *homo economicus* of their theories is really a moral person with highly developed humanistic virtues taken from Judaism, Christianity, or some correlative tradition. For when economists write "rational," they also mean "law-abiding" and at

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least minimally "honest," "trustworthy," and "morally reliable." They emphatically do *not* mean a crook, cheat, liar, manipulator, or narcissist with whom it is impossible to have a trusting relationship. A deal has to be a deal. A partner one cannot trust brings a high cost in efficiency, and a high probability of eventual disaster. The true anthropology of capitalism, the only premise on which it can work, encodes a far richer morality than is exemplified by that unfortunate orphan.

Analogously, an unfortunate orphan brought up until the age of three without human contact, warmth, or emotional involvement is not a fair metaphor for the ordinary people who endured the imposition of amoral communism upon them for decades. But it *is* a fair metaphor for the aims and practices of communism. Where there ought to be a "self" in that young man, there is a cipher. This child learned to determine his direction by negotiating his way around any resistance he meets to getting what he wants, like a robot bumping and bouncing away, incapable of internal self-government. Within his own personal history, there is a dialectic of resistant objects that have marked out the paths forced upon him: a kind of miniature Dialectical Materialism, blind and irresistible.

Also inhuman.

Long before World War II ended, a group of economists and philosophers in Germany began thinking about the *novus ordo* that would have to replace Nazism once Hitler came to the end of his line. They recognized that if they were to build a humane society they would have to reconstruct a new political order, a new economic order, and a new moral/cultural order. To construct any *one* of these orders is a herculean job, but to be obliged to construct all *three*—and to be obliged to do so almost simultaneously—is virtually superhuman.

The hope of these "*Ordo* economists," as they called themselves, was that Germany had not suffered total cultural and moral damage under Nazism, given that the regime had lasted only twelve years. They further hoped that there were strong remnants of the humanistic past that could again be drawn upon, but in a more careful way. Their philosophy, and their vision of a "social market economy," became the practical guide to the "miraculous" success of postwar Germany. Their great success shows that it is not impossible to construct the three interdependent social systems—political, economic, and moral/cultural—that constitute the free society, in which free persons and free communities can flourish, and even to do so within a relatively short time. This success gives heart to all who must achieve something similar, even if yet more difficult.

Such a task, moreover, is never fully done once and for all, but must often be recapitulated. Each generation needs to rediscover why the free society is constructed as it is, and why it demands so many sacrifices and so much unrelenting effort. The free society is moral, or not at all. That is why it is so precarious. Any one generation, deciding that it is not worth the cost, can throw it over.

But the moral situation of the formerly Communist countries is far more desperate than the situation of Germany in 1945. For the moral destruction that communism wrought in Russia during seventy-two years had to be far more destructive of traditional institutions, practices, and associations. The damage to human capital was incalculable.

This much we know. Even under the best of conditions, it is extremely difficult to construct a free society that works, that endures, that is self-correcting. The silent artillery that communism leveled at the human spirit and at every internal nerve of human capital for more than seventy years had its effect. The transition from communism to a free society is consequently a severely demanding moral task. It is a transition to a society free from torture, assassination, extortion, and tyranny in its political system; nourishing orderly and creative enterprise and liberating the poor from poverty in its economic system; and through its cultural system rewarding the habits that make a free economy and a free polity both possible and worthwhile.

How that transition goes is perhaps the greatest issue of our time. Everything depends upon the use that humans make of the liberty with which each is endowed, while there is still time to affect the outcome. We are the *subjects* of this drama, not the *objects*.

Thomas Jefferson, no orthodox believer, put it this way: "The God who gave us life gave us liberty at the same time." It is no hindrance to our purposes to understand that liberty is the Creator's jewel, favored by Providence. Theism is no hindrance to personal dignity. On the contrary, it is its source. FT

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Stillbirth

Leah Koncelik Lebec

I woke up feeling not too great. The weight of the baby pulled at my back and sides. In the past couple of weeks it had been getting harder to turn over in bed. I wasn't that big yet, but all the weight was so concentrated and unbalanced. I lay there, feeling woozy. What was going on? Aches and pains had settled everywhere during the night. My calves ached, my back ached, my neck ached. My head was heavy.

I got up. The bathroom was warm and steamy, and Alain was shaving. I leaned against the doorjamb. "Don't feel so good," I mumbled.

"What's wrong?"

"I don't know. Maybe I'm coming down with something."

"You'd better take it easy today."

"Yes."

I decided to take a shower anyway. The water streamed over my rounded body. Pregnancy gave me a whole new self: my hair had doubled its volume, my nails grew faster than I could trim them. Everything was pumped up and primed with new life, blossoming. Now, however, the body was heavy, achy, woozy.

I cupped my hands around my smooth, full middle. "What's going on, little one?"

"What did you say?" said Alain, putting away his after-shave lotion in the medicine chest.

"I was talking to the baby. He isn't mov . . ."

What? What was I saying? Shake off that thought. I patted my hands briskly on top of my tummy. "Come on. Come on. Wake up!" They sleep and they wake, just like we do. They wake when we sleep and jump and stretch and turn. Then they sleep a lot when we move around. He was only sleeping.

I came out of the shower, wrapped myself in a towel. Alain was looking at me, frowning. "Are you all right?"

"I'm sick. I'll go back to bed for a few hours."

"Call me if you need me. And call the doctor."

I lay there, feeling worse as the hours went by. By one o'clock, I realized I had a fever. I took my temperature. A hundred and two degrees. I called the doctor. "Probably just the flu," she said. "There's flu going around. Drink fluids, stay in bed. Take care of yourself." The doctor's name was Shelley. My age, or maybe younger. Very casual, very laid back. All her patients called her by her first name.

At three o'clock, I started shaking. Chills and fever. Time to call the doctor again. "Shelley's not here. But we paged her at the hospital and she says to stop by the office. Someone here will check you out." The office was a block away. I put on a dress, sleeveless, flowered. It was August 24, warm and sunny.

A nurse snapped commands at me. "Get on the table. Lie down. You don't have a fever. You're not sick." Was she crazy? Gone were the chummy conversations of the regular staff, of Shelley. Instead we had some female commandant, barking orders and flexing her authority. "The baby's not moving," I blurted out.

"Yes it is," she replied. Who was this woman? Where had they found her? I was passive, conciliatory. "Well, I thought he wasn't moving. And I have had a fever. It comes in waves, then I get chilled."

"The baby's fine. Get up. You can go."

These are the words that would burn in the mind. These are the seeds of rage. There were to be many more before he died, and was born.

The long afternoon wore on. From the bed, I move to the living room couch. I pull a blanket over me, push it off. Fever mounts, sweat soaks the couch. Every muscle seems to be curling in on itself, contracting around the sickness. The body is fighting hard. The

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little man inside is fighting even harder, but I don't know that. That ignorance would pound me with grief and guilt, much later. What could anyone have done? Who knows? But the guilt I would later feel had little basis in logic: the heart has its reasons, for guilt as for love as for rage. I kept no loving vigil, I did nothing to stave off death.

Third call to the doctor. "This flu," she says, "everybody has it. Just everybody. Did you take some Tylenol? Remember, Tylenol only, no aspirin." I go back to bed. Now it's seven o'clock. More chills and shaking. I get up to go to the bathroom. I have to hold onto the walls as I move. Suddenly, there is blood.

I stumble out of the bathroom just as Alain is walking in the apartment door.

"I'm bleeding."

He reacts with great urgency, which frightens me even more. When I see Alain's set face and hear his taut voice, I start to panic a little. He calls the doctor, then puts me on the phone with Shelley.

"Well, I think you'd better come down to the hospital. I'll take a look at you. I'm here."

On the elevator up to the maternity floor, I can hardly stand. I lean against the elevator wall and feel the sweat course down my face. It seems that each burning wave of fever leaves me more drained and shaking than the last. I disrobe, put on their little flowered smock with the silly ties in the back, and give them a urine sample in the bathroom next to the treatment room. More blood. "I'm bleeding," I say to the nurse. It seems very important to sound calm and controlled, so I keep my voice steady and informative. There is a tremendous pull to be a good and intelligent patient, and not to give anyone any trouble.

Now contractions are starting. Shelley appears, examines me, and announces that there is significant bleeding from the uterus. The baby's heart is monitored, contractions are monitored, my blood pressure is monitored every fifteen minutes. I am in labor. The baby's heart is beating very fast. I am twenty-eight weeks pregnant, and I am in active labor. No one has the slightest idea what is going on.

Shelley decides to give some medication to stop labor, and, finally, an antibiotic. She gives the nurse instructions, then leaves for the night. The monitors are removed. Alain offers to stay, but I tell him to go. The night nurse comes to give me a shot. Aftershocks of pain continue to pulse through me. I cry out involuntarily. "I haven't even given you the second one yet," she says, and there is unmistakable fatigue and disdain in her voice.

She leaves. Everything is hurting, everything is dark. Machines are blinking. From another time and space come the faint noises of cars, taxis, buses. People are out there, moving around the city. I am so far from them, from everyone. I don't know what's going on in this room, in my body, and no one else does either. I am afraid. A cry rises up in my throat, something like a sob, but I control it. It seems important to stifle that sob.

And then he died, sometime during the quiet predawn hours. No one wept as he died. No one knew the precise moment when his heart renounced the struggle, and he gave up his spirit.

It is dawn. I lie there, in the little white room with the cabinets and machines, waiting for someone to appear. The weight of the baby is heavy on my back. My hands are held lightly around my womb. I notice that I have no fever. The morning nurse comes in, cheerful and friendly. She picks up the stethoscope and starts to search for the baby's heartbeat. The room is silent.

"Where exactly were they picking up the heartbeat last night?" she asks.

"I don't know. Down on the left side, I think."

"Hmmm . . . just a sec. Shelley's in the hall, I'll be right back."

Shelley and the nurse come in. Shelley is holding the Doppler ultrasound monitor—high-tech stuff that can pick up the heartbeat of an eight-week-old fetus. She moves the monitor over my belly, slowly, methodically. Up, down, across; up, down, across. No one speaks. She repeats the gestures, over and over again. I glance fleetingly at the nurse. Her face is lowered. Her eyes are fixed on the floor.

"Leah . . . these monitors . . . they're very sensitive—extremely sensitive. We don't . . . we're not picking up any heart sounds."

Alain walks into the room. He takes one look. "What is it?"

"The baby's heart has stopped." I say that very calmly, because I am calm. Nothing is real. There was a heartbeat, now there is none. There were some sounds in the universe, but now those sounds are still.

Alain leans over to hold me. The doctor is saying some things—not much more information—evidence of some infection, somewhere—she is sorry—I should go home and await the birth.

There is some kind of play going on, and nobody had given me the lines to learn. I don't know what I am supposed to say or do. I am very removed, and for some reason, I still keep clinging to my insane desire to please everyone, to be polite, good, and cooperative. Okay. Yes. We'll go home and await the birth. I guess I'll call when contractions start again. Is that all right? Is that what I should do? What if they start in the middle of the night? Oh, sorry, silly question, I'll call whenever they start. Yes, definitely, I will finish out

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these antibiotics: one three times a day for two more days. (Two days? said a doctor later. Two days? Infection strong enough to kill and you're given antibiotics for two days? And then he stopped talking, abruptly.)

On that first day home, Alain and I move through our life carefully, delicately. We don't know what to do or what to think. We don't even know what to say to people. "The baby died, we're waiting for him to be born"? The belly has become an embarrassment, something shockingly wrong. We don't want people to see us. We go to get the antibiotics, then we go home. I lie on the bed and rest. In the afternoon, I get up and write in my diary, something about how the baby has died, and some sentences of farewell and resignation. They feel completely meaningless. I am not feeling a thing.

It is night. We go to bed. Alain used to kiss the baby goodnight. He used to lean over and lay his head on my middle, his arms cradling me. "Good night, baby," he would say. "Sleep tight. Don't kick your mama too hard tonight"—and then we'd laugh because, sure enough, the baby would start jumping and thrashing around at the sound of his voice.

That first night, we went to bed, and neither one of us knew what to do. There was the lump that used to be "the baby," but it wasn't the baby anymore. We didn't have the words to talk about it. But as I lay back against the pillow, and turned quietly away from him, my heart started beating fast. There was something looming on the edges of my consciousness, but I didn't want it to come any closer.

Suddenly a whisper rose unbidden from my heart: "Good night, baby." I wanted silence. Stonily, I turned to fitful, fearful sleep. But the whisper rose again, even as my mind tried to crush the words: "Good night, little one." And then, with a thrill of fear: "Farewell, beloved."

The next day, we went to a church. We were vaguely wondering what we should do when the baby was born. Should we bury it? Should we baptize it? We talked to a priest. We didn't know him and he didn't know us. We were not rooted in any religious community then. We stumbled into his church, and demanded that he say the right words to us at a time when neither he nor we could know how heavily these decisions would weigh.

"Don't think of it as anything but an operation," he said. "Don't bury it or baptize it. It will only increase the pain." He's right, I thought, even as a more cynical thought nudged its way in: an "operation"? What does this guy know about childbirth? But Alain and I decided to agree with him. We didn't really care one way or another about burial or ritual. The fetus was dead. The sooner its body was taken care of the better.

Labor started again that evening. All night long, the long birth pangs continued. I thought of nothing but surviving the physical pain. No drugs, no anesthesia, no epidural, no cute breathing exercises—none of us was focusing on this as a "normal" birth. I think we were all concentrating on one thing only: get it over with, get the fetus out of there, and move on.

Finally, he was born. "Push," said Shelley one last time, and he was out. Silence. She cut and clamped the cord. She wrapped him in a towel, wiped the blood off his face, and closed his eyes.

"Do you want to hold him?" she asked.

"Yes," I said. I was exhausted.

She placed him in my arms. Alain stood beside me, next to the narrow bed. I took the baby into the crook of my elbow, and felt the weight of his body against me.

I raised one hand, and cupped it around his tiny head. There was a kind of downy hair on his head. I touched the swirling soft pattern with the tips of my fingers. I caressed his head, then his cheek. I stared into a perfect face.

His eyes were closed. I touched the lids, then bent to kiss them: first one, then the other. He looked asleep. There was a dimple in his chin; the little mouth was shaped like his father's. A rosebud mouth, so still and quiet.

No cry, no sound, my son?

I ran my hand down from his shoulder to his hand. I picked up that hand, and stared at the fingers. They were feather-light. Each had a tiny, pink, translucent nail. The little hand curled softly around my finger. I had never known such vulnerability, such fragility. I am holding your hand, little one. You are so small, and I am here. I am your mother. I am a mother. To you. You are my son.

I cradled his head closer, closer. My hand cupped his face. He was silent, still. His weight was in my arms. The weight of his body, his face, his hand, his fingers—these stay with me, forever.

I looked up. Alain looked stricken. "I can't hold him," I said, flatly. I meant: I will not hold him in this life. He is gone from me. I will not be able to hold my baby.

Shelley thought I meant "I can't bear to hold him," and immediately came over and took him out of my arms. She wrapped the towel around him more firmly. She wrapped it all the way around him, and covered his face. She laid him on top of a cart, covered with shiny instruments. She turned to the nurse.

"Take this to Pathology. Tell them to send me a report."

The nurse complied. She wheeled the cart out of the room. And that was our farewell.

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The day wore on. My heart went into a fluttering arrhythmia, clocked at two hundred beats a minute. Monitors, machines, cardiologists, ceaseless activity, everyone bent now on finding out "what was going on."

Nothing was going on. I had a minor heart condition which chose that moment to show up and deflect attention over to my heart, instead of to what had just happened to "the fetus." Nevertheless, Shelley and all the hospital personnel treated the tachycardia as though it were a full-fledged coronary, and we went through the rest of the day never once mentioning the stillbirth.

Finally, it is night. My heart has calmed down. I have been placed in a room on another floor, someone having kindly understood that the maternity wing was probably inappropriate at this time. Alain, exhausted, has gone home again, to an empty apartment and his own thoughts. My mother, on vacation in Vermont, has finally gotten through to me. She is crying. I say some things to comfort her, then hang up, turn out the light, and turn to sleep.

It is dark. There are no machines, no doctors, no nurses, no one to be polite to, no heart problem to talk about and explain, no husband to hover worriedly over my bed, no tests, no monitors.

There is no baby.

There, in the dark, it hits me. The grief is a physical thing. It comes in waves—wave after wave, shocking my spirit, shattering my heart. I curl my body around its emptiness. Its center is gone. Its womb is empty. My arms are empty.

But you were here! I held you! Where have you gone, beloved? Where are you, my little son?

There is no one in the room with me, but even so, I try to muffle the wrenching sobs. His vulnerability, his fragility, his weight are more than I can bear. I feel him in my arms, but he is not here. My son. I am a mother, but my child is gone. Where are you? He is not here, but I cannot let him go. Who is holding that hand? On what breast are you cradled tonight? Are you afraid, wherever you are? Are you crying? Is someone there to hold you? Please God, hold him, rock him, cradle him, soothe him, whisper to him, caress him. Love him for me, please God.

The storm passes, but I am changed forever. It sufficed to hold him, to look into his face, and he entered my heart forever. I am a mother, and my son has died. Where there was no knowledge of him before, now there is a river, coursing through my mind and heart, bearing the memory and the loss of him forever.

For the first few months, the river is a torrent, crashing through my life, shattering friendships, straining family ties, reconfiguring my marriage, leaving devastation everywhere. People say the most painful things, and I have no words to make them understand. "You'll have another." "It was probably for the best." All these statements seem to spring from a similar source: the speaker's desire to minimize the trauma—for me, he thinks, not understanding that he is also minimizing it for himself. He cannot see what there is to grieve about. He cannot imagine "the baby," and therefore there is nothing to mourn. What's more, he finds reasons why the stillbirth was a "good thing."

This is not malevolent behavior. People genuinely think they are helping when they tell me that "You'll have plenty more." But the words wound, and they are relentless. "All better now?" chirps a friend ten days after the birth. "How's your thesis progressing?" asks another, avoiding the subject altogether.

But if friends and casual acquaintances seem to lack understanding, the presumptions of the wider culture batter the heart of any woman who has ever mourned a pre-term child. A mother who mourns a pregnancy loss learns to carry her grief silently, as if ashamed of her sorrow. Who cares if a child dies before it is born? Aren't there too many children in the world already? And who says she lost a real baby anyway? In reading through some insurance papers after the birth of our son, I stopped at one sentence, a description of how the pregnancy had ended. "Fetal Wastage" was the term.

We named our son Damien. We understood, too late, how healing and important are the rituals of death. We tried to find his body, to have him baptized and buried, but, true to the monumental mishandling they had displayed from the beginning, Shelley and the hospital staff had lost the baby's body and had no records of where he had been taken. "Where are you?" became both a literal and figurative cry. My dreams were dominated for months by desperate searches, through darkness, through strange lands, with empty arms stretched out in front of stumbling feet.

Of course time heals, and grief gives way to peace. Slowly, I allowed myself to let him go, as I drew comfort and strength from art and song and prayer, those tentative human recreations of the sacred. I had a tape of the soprano Janet Baker. Her voice wove a gentle web of love around my child—the tremulous, reverent "Ave Maria" allowed another mother's arms to take him up and hold him; the lullaby cadence of "Close Thine Eyes" permitted both censored grief and thwarted love to simply be, unhindered and unjudged:

Close thine eyes
And sleep secure
Thy soul is safe
Thy body's sure

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He that guards thee
He that keeps
Never slumbers, never sleeps
Then close thine eyes
And sleep secure.

Only through such rites and symbols could I begin to give him over into the arms of his Maker. Slowly, I allowed myself to turn back to this life, this time, this valley.

The river is calm now, its torrents still and peaceful. There are seeds to sow, harvests to reap, and work to do before our own nightfall. Gabriel, Christina, and Xavier have come to bless us. Their upturned faces and sweet eyes ground us, center us, and fill us with purpose. But Damien changed the landscape of my hopes and my dreams and my thoughts. My children speak of him naturally and happily, without the embarrassment or fear that so many adults feel in hearing his name. They expect to see him one day, "on that mountain," where every tear is washed away. He is not here, yet he is with us. I bear him forever, my firstborn son, and my children speak his name.

"Stillbirth." There is such paradox in the word, such death. The first syllable cancels out the second. All that newness, that unfurling life, is canceled out already, from the beginning. All that sweet force, gathering, gathering, month after month, now silent, still.

And yet, triumphing over that tragic paradox, I have found an astonishing, infinitely more paradoxical joy, embedded even in that memory of my first child, unmoving in my arms.

What possible joy? The realization, for me, of how strongly God loves us. Yes, loves us, all six billion—whatever—of us, teeming over the earth. I have come to understand the love for Damien that pierced my heart as a dim reflection of God's love for us. Such love is instantaneous, it is absolute, it has no care for how many of us there are or what we have accomplished. It has no care for how long we have been alive. Young or old, sick or well, we are lovely in His sight, worthy to His heart. The love that overwhelmed me, even for a seven-month-old stillborn baby, also deepened my understanding, comforted me, and in the end, held up for me a mirror of the divine. Our capacity to grasp the humanity, the luminous beauty, of every child who comes into being is our capacity to love as God loves—with a strength that is primal, unreasonable, and unshakable.

God loves us as a mother loves her child—because we are there, because we are His, because we are ourselves: irreplaceable, forever unique, never, ever to be forgotten. "The Lord called me from the womb, from the body of my mother he named my name" (Isaiah 49:1). FT

Philadelphia, September 1987

Brown brittle leaves
Rustle on the walk
Like ancient manuscripts.

A child laughs.
He chases down a sheaf
And crushes it to dust.

Can the dry wind bring the rain?
Can dead leaves be green again?

Peter Leithart

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A Clash of Orthodoxies: An Exchange

Josh Dever / Robert P. George

Josh Dever

As an atheist, a liberal, and a philosopher, I suppose I'm as likely as anyone to qualify as a proponent of Robert P. George's "secular orthodoxy" ("A Clash of Orthodoxies," August/September 1999). As such, I'd like to say a few words in defense of that orthodoxy. I want to raise three categories of objection to Professor George's comments: first, that his characterization of that orthodoxy is highly tendentious; second, that the philosophical failings of that orthodoxy are not nearly so numerous as Prof. George takes them to be; and third, that the corresponding philosophical triumphs of the "Judeo-Christian" worldview are not so triumphant as he represents them.

Prof. George feels that committed members of the secular orthodoxy hold a number of unpalatable views. We are supposed to reject the "condemnation of . . . infanticide of so-called defective children," and to believe that "marriage . . . is a legal convention whose goal is to support a merely emotional union"; that there should be "not even an opportunity for silent prayer in public schools"; that there should be "no legislation based on the religiously informed moral convictions of legislators or voters"; that a person desiring but unable to commit suicide is "entitled to assistance"; that if such a person "is not lucid enough to make the decision for himself, then judgment must be substituted for him by the family or court"; that reason is purely instrumental; and that persons lack free will (to pick a few of the ascriptions that struck me as most objectionable).

I suppose Prof. George is free to define his target category of "secular orthodoxy" in any way he sees fit, but if he wants his "orthodoxy" to be in any real sense an orthodoxy, I'm afraid he has set up a straw man. While I suppose I could hunt down individuals holding each of the views listed above, I think it's clear that all of the above views (with the regrettable exception of the view that reason is slave to the passions, and even there I think recent work on externalism in practical reason is beginning to turn the tide) are extreme minority views. Were they not, Peter Singer's notoriety would be hard to understand. If Prof. George is genuinely out to compare the prospects of secularism and Judeo-Christianity as philosophical foundations of morality, both charity and good academic practice would seem to require focusing on the best that secularism has to offer, rather than on its extremists.

The characterization of the so-called secular orthodoxy (I'll suggest below that there's good reason to doubt that there is such a thing) is, however, the least of my three complaints. Let's now consider more substantive issues, beginning with the particular philosophical charges that Prof. George raises against secular orthodoxy. According to him, those of us doing our moral reasoning within this tradition are guilty of the following crimes: endorsing a mind/body dualism, rejecting (in a self-contradictory manner) free will, eliminating any intrinsic reason for pursuit of the moral good, and embracing relativism. All of these charges are, I think, wholly false.

Prof. George claims that secularists who believe that bodily life is not intrinsically valuable are committed

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to mind/body dualism. The secularist view in question here holds that the mere fact that an organism is alive and of the human species is not enough to endow it with (full) moral worth—other qualities, such as consciousness, phenomenology, or future-directedness, are needed also. Since, however, mind/body dualism is almost entirely a dead philosophical position these days, secularists who have thought through their position carefully also believe that whether an organism has these further characteristics is entirely a function of the physical structure of that organism (as well as, perhaps, the causal imbedding of that organism in some larger environment). Believing that these structural features are important to moral worth no more commits one to mind/body dualism than does believing that the structural features that come with life morally differentiate a person from a corpse. Views on when morally protected personhood begins and ends can vary greatly—at conception, at birth, after birth, before death, at death, after death—without in any way endorsing a metaphysical separation between person and body.

Deciding that not all living organisms of the human species are persons is dangerous territory, of course, and we must be guided by the terrible misdeeds of the past that have frequently come under the banner of denying full personhood to various groups. But the line must be drawn somewhere by everyone, so mere accusations of line-drawing can carry no weight. And just as there is a price to pay for drawing the line too narrowly, there is also a price to pay for drawing the line too widely, since the moral duties owed toward persons can place a heavy burden on others. Thus there is reason to try to find the right place to draw the line, and not to fence about the law too broadly.

Furthermore, while secularists may deny the intrinsic value of bodily life by way of denying that all human life enjoys the full moral protection of personhood, they are not thereby committed to denying that persons have intrinsic value. This leads to the broader point of whether secularists must lose entirely the concept of intrinsic value. Prof. George seems to feel that they must, but I admit I see no reason why this is the case. It is true that British Empiricism left philosophy with a legacy whose twin denial of the motivational power of reason and of epistemic access to objective normative facts made it hard to find conceptual room for intrinsic values (although these difficulties hardly stopped people from trying). However, under the corrective influence of philosophers such as W. V. O. Quine, Wilfrid Sellars, and Donald Davidson, strict empiricism has largely been abandoned as a philosophical position, and (while the philosophical problems certainly have not been fully resolved) a more full-blooded epistemology, which allows for real knowledge of moral facts, has been widely adopted. Similarly, Bernard Williams' work has led to a revival of interest in the broadly Socratic idea that reason can be intrinsically motivating.

Thus it is not at all true to say that secular orthodoxy possesses no resources for answering the question "Why should I respect the rights of others?" We can offer both the "internal" reason that I should do so because it would be wrong to do otherwise, and at least the beginnings of an external reason based on considerations about the nature of agency. The latter reason is far from complete as of yet, but if one considers the corresponding questions about theoretical reason—"why should I obey the rules of logic in my thought?"—and looks at work arguing that it is in the nature of being a holder of beliefs (as opposed to wishes, desires, etc.) that one is committed to certain norms governing beliefs, the outlines of its future directions may become clear. That we don't yet have all the answers is, I take it, not a very serious charge against secular orthodoxy (especially since, as I'll suggest below, the same is true of the Judeo-Christian philosophical foundation).

Prof. George's charge that secular orthodoxy is committed to relativism I find particularly baffling, both because he gives no reason to think that this is the case, and because it runs so counter to my experience as a professional philosopher. Anyone who has spent time teaching in the philosophy classroom can tell you how much effort is devoted to trying to convince students that it's not acceptable to talk blithely about what's "true for you" and "true for me."

Prof. George's further charge that secular orthodoxy is committed to the denial of free will I also find baffling, since the view that there is no free will is an extreme minority position in philosophy. As I read Prof. George, we secularists are supposed to reject free will because it comes into conflict with "hard" or "soft" determinism. However, the dominant (although hardly universal) view among philosophers these days is that there is no genuine conflict between determinism and free will. Donald Davidson, for example, has said that arguments for that supposed conflict are no more than "superficially plausible." Far from being "written off as an illusion," free will is alive and well under the secularist orthodoxy.

The argument that the denial of free will is "rationally untenable," by the way, is fallacious. While it may well be the case that, if there were no free will, there would be no point in announcing that there is no free will, or even that the nature of our subjective experience is such that none of us can seriously doubt the existence of free will, this does nothing to show that there is free will. Those few who become philosophi-

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cally convinced that there is no free will might be correct in what they announce, even if there's no point in telling us and even if, like Hume, they immediately slip back into their pre-philosophical endorsement of free will.

I fail to see, then, that Prof. George has provided any evidence that secular orthodoxy suffers from philosophical bankruptcy. As I have said, the philosophical foundations of morality are a work in progress, and we certainly don't claim to have all the answers yet, or even universal agreement about the right directions to go in, but I don't see any reason to think that we're obviously on the wrong track.

Let's look now at some of the supposed philosophical successes of the Judeo-Christian orthodoxy: its account of free will, its defense of the rights of others, its explanation of the intrinsic value of bodily life, and its account of the intrinsic value of marriage. I don't mean in any case to claim that the Judeo-Christian framework is a failure on these issues, but I do want to try to show that that framework is subject to the same difficulties as the secular framework.

Prof. George chastises secular orthodoxy for its (supposed) abandonment of free will in the face of determinism, but he gives no indication of how the Judeo-Christian framework will escape any threat that determinism poses to free will (if there is no threat, of course, there's no problem for secular orthodoxy either). Will he deny determinism? This is a hard row to hoe in light of what we now know about the connections between brain states and mental life, and (as many philosophers have argued) it doesn't seem to help with the underlying issues anyway. Will he appeal to "rationally motivated action"? Then he needs a theory of reason to back up this possibility, and an explanation of why deterministic control of which reasons we act on doesn't threaten our freedom. None of these things appear (or are even alluded to) in the article.

Prof. George also suggests that Judeo-Christian moral foundations enjoy an explanatory advantage over the secular orthodoxy in that they are able to explain why one ought to respect the rights of others—by showing that these rights are "rooted in intelligible and basic human goods." However, rooting the rights in basic human goods does nothing to solve the problem if there is not some further reason why we ought to pursue the good. If Judeo-Christian philosophy provides such a reason, Prof. George has made no mention of it. If it provides no such reason, then it is unclear why basic goods are any better than basic rights as a foundation that must be respected.

Prof. George also holds that Judeo-Christian philosophy, through its rejection of mind/body dualism, upholds the intrinsic value of bodily life. As I have argued above, there is no intimate connection between one's views on mind/body dualism and the intrinsic value (or lack thereof) of the body. To show that bodily life is intrinsically valuable, one must give some explanation of the source of its intrinsic value; merely saying that there is no person separate from the body does nothing to provide such an explanation. Judeo-Christian philosophy, as I understand it, traditionally finds the roots of the intrinsic moral value of the human person in the scriptural assertion that humanity is created in God's image, but until it is specified in what way we are in God's image, conclusions about what aspects of our existence give rise to our intrinsic value are premature.

Finally, Prof. George holds that Judeo-Christian philosophy can provide an explanation of the intrinsic value of marriage. Details of this explanation are sketchy in his article, but it would seem that the explanation derives from the biological fact that we come in two sexes who interact sexually. This fact, however, would seem to leave us very far from the desired conclusion. Some explanation of why this particular feature of our biology is normative (and normative only when sexuality manifests itself in the heterosexual variety) must be added, as well as a demonstration that the purported normativity of the biological facts requires the institution of monogamous and indissoluble marriage.

My own inclination would be to locate the intrinsic value, and non-conventionality, of marriage in (or at least in part in) the objective obligations incurred through the marital vows, but this is clearly common secular territory, and does little to capture specifically heterosexual or monogamous marriage.

Again, it is not my intention to claim that the secular orthodoxy is free of philosophical difficulties or that Judeo-Christian philosophical foundations are hopelessly flawed. My impression, rather, is that both philosophies are faced with many serious questions to which they lack complete answers, but few (if any) issues that threaten a complete overturn of the program. Indeed, I find it revealing that, for the most part, the very same questions hound both programs.

I want to close by commenting briefly on whether there is such a thing as "secular orthodoxy," and on whether such a thing could provide neutral territory for the pursuit of public debate. In my view, what is orthodox, and common ground for all, are the rules of right reason that situate the various philosophical tensions in conceptual space and provide the rules for navigating among those tensions. Provided one rejects (as I think one should) the pseudo-Kierkegaardian idea that religious faith is a rationally unwarrant-

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ed leap into the dark, this orthodoxy is open to secularists and nonsecularists alike, because our reason is both universal and prior to our particular convictions as Christians, Jews, atheists, etc.

An orthodoxy based on rationality provides us a common arena in which to do battle, but I think it is an error to believe that any one view will emerge victorious from that arena. That's just not the way reason works. As Peter van Inwagen so eloquently observes, reason, outside of special fields like mathematics and logic, rarely delivers unequivocal responses. The typical situation is that many views will be rationally permissible, not that one will be rationally compelling. How to construct public policy when we cannot expect our best reasons to convince all good-willed rational agents is a problem to which I don't have a solution, but one that our sadly limited epistemic status seems to force on to us.

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Robert P. George

I am grateful to Josh Dever for his thoughtful challenge to my essay "A Clash of Orthodoxies."

Professor Dever states candidly his religious views and moral-political commitments: he is an atheist and a liberal. He begins by proposing to defend the secularist orthodoxy, though later he suggests that no such orthodoxy exists. With a single exception—which, interestingly, Prof. Dever himself considers to be "regrettable"—he claims that the positions I have attributed to secularist liberalism are, in truth, "extreme minority views." The most he is prepared to concede is that one could probably "hunt down individuals holding each of [these] views."

I'm afraid I cannot yield to Prof. Dever's claim. Perhaps things are different at the University of Texas, but even on a rainy day when most people stay indoors I could "hunt down" dozens of people who hold these views simply by taking a stroll across the Princeton campus.

Let's consider some of the specific positions I attributed to the secularist orthodoxy. I said that orthodox secularists "reject traditional morality's condemnation of abortion, suicide, infanticide of so-called defective children, and certain other life-taking acts." That the overwhelming majority of Prof. Dever's fellow atheists and liberals support abortion and suicide is hardly a disputable proposition. Indeed, Prof. Dever himself doesn't dispute it. He complains about my claim that orthodox secularists reject the "condemnation of . . . infanticide of so-called defective children." Readers will take note of what is omitted in the ellipsis.

What about infanticide? Is the "letting die" (as the more squeamish insist on describing it) of mentally retarded or severely physically handicapped babies an "extreme minority view" among orthodox secularists, as Prof. Dever maintains? It must be, he suggests, for otherwise "Peter Singer's notoriety would be hard to understand." It is true, of course, that Singer has been a particularly vocal (and notably non-squeamish) defender of infanticide. Nevertheless, Prof. Dever could not have chosen a worse piece of evidence for an alleged consensus among orthodox secularists against the killing of handicapped newborns. Opposition to Singer's appointment as DeCamp Professor of Bioethics at Princeton has come *entirely* from outside the University faculty, mostly from outside the University community, and mainly from believing Jews and Christians. Among orthodox secularists at Princeton and elsewhere, Singer's appointment is uncontroversial. With the single exception of John DiIulio—the eminent social scientist (and devout Christian) who has, alas, since resigned from the Princeton faculty to accept a new chair in faith and public policy at the University of Pennsylvania—I know of no member of the Princeton faculty who has publicly spoken out against Singer for his defense of infanticide.

I have no doubt that there are secularists who have qualms about killing handicapped newborns. (Prof. Dever himself suggests that infanticide is not part of "the best that secularism has to offer.") Some—perhaps many—secularists believe that Singer's defense of infanticide goes too far and would permit the practice in too many cases. But there are two points worth making.

First, even those secularists who oppose infanticide generally admit, in defending abortion, that it is difficult on their own premises to identify a mistake in Singer's argument that newborns—particularly severely handicapped newborns—do not suddenly become "persons" merely by emerging from the womb. Second, the secularist orthodoxy—like any orthodoxy—consists not only of those views that all members of the group share, but also of those views that are considered within the group to be reasonable and acceptable to hold, even if not everybody in the group happens to share them. (For example, Catholic orthodoxy holds that the Virgin Mary was, at the end of her life on earth, assumed bodily into heaven. Although most orthodox Catholics believe that Mary's assumption occurred after her death, it is a mark of Catholic orthodoxy to consider it reasonable and acceptable to believe, as others do, that Mary was

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assumed into heaven without dying.) No one can doubt that, among orthodox secularists, Singer's willingness to defend infanticide in the case of severely handicapped newborns is considered reasonable and acceptable in a way that it is not among observant Jews and Christians.

Another position that Prof. Dever insists is held only by "an extreme minority" of orthodox secularists is opposition to "even an opportunity for silent prayer in public schools." On this point, I must say, I am astonished by Prof. Dever's claim. The Supreme Court's anti-school prayer decisions, beginning with *Engel v. Vitale* in 1962, and including its 1985 ruling in *Wallace v. Jaffree* striking down even a minute of silence for "meditation or voluntary prayer" in public schools, have been joined by every liberal justice on the Court and applauded by liberals of every stripe. Neither Prof. Dever nor I would have the slightest difficulty "hunting down" secularist liberal pundits, constitutional scholars, political theorists, and others who enthusiastically support *Jaffree* and the other school prayer decisions. Indeed, the true challenge would be finding a few secularists who actually oppose them. Theirs would be an altogether *un*orthodox secularism.

Yet another issue Prof. Dever raises is assisted suicide and "substituted judgment" for mentally incapacitated people who are not able to make the decision whether to end their suffering by suicide. As with infanticide, I have no doubt that there are dissenters among secularist liberals on this issue; but the consensus is plainly in favor of assisted suicide and substituted judgment. Prof. Dever's field is philosophy. He is certainly aware of the celebrated amicus curiae brief filed by Ronald Dworkin, John Rawls, Robert Nozick, Thomas Nagel, Tim Scanlon, and Judith Jarvis Thomson—arguably the six most influential liberal moral philosophers in the United States—asking the Supreme Court to invalidate laws prohibiting assisted suicide and to establish a right to assistance in dying. Dworkin is the author of a much admired book defending euthanasia and substituted judgment. No one I know thinks that Dworkin's advocacy of a "right to die" places him on the extreme fringes of the liberal camp. I doubt that Prof. Dever actually thinks that.

I could make similar points about the issues of marriage and legislation based on religiously informed moral judgments, but at this point let me go straight to some of the big philosophical issues to which Prof. Dever devotes most of his space.

He concedes that most secularists subscribe to the "subjectivist" or "noncognitivist" view of practical reason as purely instrumental—the "slave of the passions," in Hume's famous characterization—though he himself happens to deviate from the secularist orthodoxy on this particular question. Indeed, he regrets the continuing dominance of the instrumental view of practical reason and hopes that the tide will soon turn against it. (This is the "regrettable exception" I made reference to at the beginning of these remarks.)

However, Prof. Dever thinks that I am wrong to ascribe to secularist liberals the belief that people lack what he calls free will (and what I call free choice). But if, as he concedes, the instrumental view of practical reason remains dominant among secularists, then what grounds could those who hold to it possibly have for believing in free choice? The problem is that free choice is impossible if practical reason is purely instrumental. One chooses freely if, and only if, one has, is aware of, and chooses for the sake of more-than-merely-instrumental reasons for action. If reason *is* merely passion's ingenious servant—if *rationally motivated action* is impossible because our ultimate ends are necessarily provided by feeling, emotion, or other subrational motivating factors—then even externally uncoerced action cannot be truly freely chosen. Rather, our actions are the products of—are determined by—such factors.

Of course, people often cling to beliefs that are incompatible with other beliefs that they hold, but among those philosophers, social scientists, and people in other fields who subscribe to the instrumental view of practical reason, I perceive little evidence for Prof. Dever's claim that "free will is alive and well under the secularist orthodoxy."

Indeed, that claim is all the more remarkable in view of Prof. Dever's admission that secularist liberals, including himself, are in fact determinists. His method of squaring this particular philosophical circle is by endorsing what he says is now the "dominant (although hardly universal) view among philosophers these days . . . that there is no genuine conflict between determinism and free will." According to this view, our actions can be *both* determined and freely chosen. Determinism must be true, he suggests, in light of "what we now know about the connections between brain states and mental life."

But on both counts Prof. Dever is mistaken. An action is truly freely chosen if and only if two things are the case: 1) the choice to do it is between (or among) alternatives considered in deliberation, and 2) both (or all) of those alternatives are really possible in the sense that only the choosing itself settles which alternative will be realized. And nothing "we now know" about brain states, mental life, and their connections compels the conclusion that our actions are determined rather than freely chosen in light of reasons that provide motivation but do not compel a decision one way or another.

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Prof. Dever bluntly claims that the self-referential argument I sketched to establish the rational untenability of the denial of free choice is "fallacious." He supposes (mistakenly) that my claim is merely that it is pointless for people who deny that there is free will *to announce their denial*, since "if there were no free will, there would be no point in announcing that there is no free will." He then replies: "Those few who become philosophically convinced that there is no free will might be correct in what they announce." But my argument had nothing to do with "announcements." Its focus is the activity that Prof. Dever misleadingly puts into the passive "becom[ing] philosophically convinced."

Philosophical reflection is a matter not simply of passively receiving the truth about, for example, free will. It is an activity in which one has every opportunity of falling into error unless one is willing to pursue truth with an energy and care that only devotion to truth can sufficiently motivate. In this activity, anyone motivated by concern for truth will be guided not only by the requirements of logic but also by the less formal norms of rationality that enable us to distinguish sound from unsound investigative procedures in science, history, philosophy, etc. These norms direct sound thinking, but they can be violated, and are violated, in all shoddy investigations and inquiries in any and every field of intellectual endeavor.

The question whether people can make free choices is not a question settled by formal logic alone; rather, the investigation of it is addressed also by norms of rationality. Everyone who engages in this reflective investigation has the opportunity of violating those norms in the interest of reaching answers that his prejudices favor, or of taking short-cuts for other motives. Everyone is confronted, right here, with the opportunity of choosing to respect, or not to respect, rationality's norms.

Those who deny that people can make truly free choices cannot claim that the truth of their position is established by bare formal logic. They must contend that those who assert the possibility of free choices are failing to attend with sufficient care to the evidence (regarding, e.g., brain states, mental life, and their connections), and ought to think the issues through more carefully, listen to reason, etc. By that *ought* they concede the very claim they are concerned to deny: the claim that one can *choose* between, say, lazy reaffirmation of one's prejudices or wishes and authentic philosophical reflection and pursuit of truth. Thus their concern that they and we should get to the truth of the matter about (not simply "announce") freedom of choice refutes their own denial that free choices can be made, and sometimes are made. (The argument that I have here been able to do no more than sketch is fully set forth by Germain Grisez, Joseph M. Boyle, Jr., and Olaf Tollefsen in their book *Free Choice: A Self-Referential Argument.*)

Prof. Dever is also critical of my claim that the secularist denial of the intrinsic, and not merely instrumental, value of human bodily life entails a rationally untenable dualism of "person" and "body." "Mind/body dualism," he says, "is almost entirely a dead philosophical position these days." It is true that most philosophers have concluded that certain positions falling under the label "dualism" (including some, such as Cartesianism, that were once widely entertained) are untenable. But there is a particular form of person/body dualism that is far from uncommon today. It reduces the person to the intermittently conscious (genderless) subject, which regards its (male or female) body as a possession or instrument that unlike other property or tools is untransferable, though discardable by suicide. My claim is that the denial of the intrinsic value of bodily life which underwrites the secularist defense of abortion, infanticide, euthanasia, and other forms of homicide entails precisely this form of dualism.

Either the body is a part of the personal reality of the human being, in which case the human person, properly speaking, is a dynamic unity of body, mind, and spirit, *or* the body is a subpersonal dimension of the human being that functions as an instrument at the service of the conscious and desiring aspect of the self—the "person," strictly speaking, who controls and uses the body. The secularist position on issues such as abortion, infanticide, and euthanasia straightforwardly treats the body as a subpersonal reality: a living human body is not a person, or, at least, is not a person until it comes to be associated (somehow) with a mind or other center of conscious self-awareness; and a living human body ceases to be a person not necessarily by dying, but at any point at which it loses this association, which may be long before death. The body, as such, according to secularists, lacks the dignity of personhood—that is why they believe it isn't necessarily wrong to kill "pre-personal" or "post-personal" human beings (fetuses, handicapped infants, the irreversibly demented, or other human "nonpersons").

Prof. Dever seems to suggest that the secularist position avoids dualism because its understanding of human beings and their attributes and capacities is purely materialist or physicalist. But that is, if I may borrow a term from Prof. Dever, fallacious. He says that "whether an organism has [these] further characteristics" that give it (full) moral standing and a right not to be killed (e.g., "consciousness, phenomenology, future-directedness") "is entirely a function of the

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physical structure of that organism (as well as, perhaps, the causal imbedding of that organism in some larger environment)." Note well: "a function of." Of course, Prof. Dever wants to avoid the claim that the "physical structure" as such gives the organism moral standing. Rather, it is *something else,* albeit something which on Prof. Dever's account is "a function of" the organism's physical structure, that works the magic of converting what would otherwise be a *mere* physical organism with no right to life (e.g., a fetus, a severely demented person, etc.) into a "person" with a dignity so profound that it is morally wrong to kill it (e.g., a healthy infant, a normal adult).

The dualism of orthodox secularism is not erased by the materialist insistence that the attributes of personhood are "entirely a function" of the physical structure of the human organism. For secularist liberals, it is the conscious, desiring, self-aware, and future-directed part of the human being that is truly the "person"; it is the psychological attributes of consciousness, self-awareness, etc. that confer "moral standing." By contrast, the living body, as such, is not part of the *personal* reality of the human being. And it is the status of the body as *subpersonal* that accounts for the willingness of secularists to authorize the killing of human beings before they become "persons" (fetuses and even infants) and after they cease being "persons" (the demented, the permanently comatose, etc.). The dualism of orthodox secularism consists in treating the "person" and the "mere living body" as really separable. "Persons" have dignity and rights; (their) "mere" living bodies do not.

Prof. Dever concedes that we enter "dangerous territory" when deciding that not all living organisms of the human species are persons. (Note, once again, the fruit of the dualistic presuppositions: there are "persons" and then there are "living organisms of the human species"—e.g., unborn and some newborn human beings, the demented, those in permanent comas—who are human beings but, according to orthodox secularists, not persons.) But, he insists, "the line must be drawn somewhere by everyone, so mere accusations of line-drawing can carry no weight." The fact, however, is that we needn't and shouldn't draw this line. The reasonable standard—the one that follows from a proper rejection of person/body dualism—is that living members of the species Homo sapiens are persons whose dignity is incompatible with a license to kill them.

Prof. Dever—believing that it is necessary to draw a line between "persons" and certain living human beings who are nonpersons—warns that "just as there is a price to pay for drawing the line too narrowly, also there is a price to pay for drawing the line too widely, since the moral duties owed to persons can place a heavy burden on others." I'm worried, on the other hand, about our natural human desire to be free of the moral duties we owe to others—particularly the weak, the infirm, and the dependent—a desire that tempts us to credit the idea of a distinction between "persons" and human nonpersons. The supposition that such a distinction can rationally be drawn does not merely place us in "dangerous territory," it perforce implicates us in a form of injustice against the most vulnerable of our fellow human beings.

Prof. Dever professes bafflement at what he takes to be my charge that secular orthodoxy is committed to relativism. As a professional philosopher, he reports, he is at pains to talk his students out of the mindless relativism they bring to the classroom. On this point, however, he seems not to have understood my claim. Indeed, I went so far as to say that "the mainstream of orthodox secularism at the end of the twentieth century has become self-consciously moralistic and *nonrelativistic.*" The defense of relativism, I said, is today largely confined to "cocktail parties and undergraduate classrooms." (On this score, at least, it sounds as though things don't vary much between Austin and Princeton.) At the same time, I asserted that secularism remains *in significant respects* a relativistic doctrine. And how could it be otherwise, if, as Prof. Dever freely concedes, the mainstream of secularist thought clings to the Humean subjectivist account of practical reason and morality?

One area in which this subjectivism makes itself felt is by relativizing allegedly self-regarding conduct. The familiar idea here is that what goes on between consenting adults simply isn't subject to critical moral evaluation. A moral issue arises only where the "rights of others" are violated or placed in jeopardy. Why, though, on a secularist understanding, should people restrain themselves—and even bear the sometimes heavy burden of moral duties—out of regard for the rights of others? On purely atheistic and materialistic premises, how can it be rational for someone to bear heavy burdens and suffer great cost—perhaps even death—to honor other people's rights? No satisfactory answer is forthcoming. None, I submit, is possible.

Prof. Dever suggests that when Judeo-Christian philosophy confronts the same question, it relies for an answer on the bare "scriptural assertion that humanity is created in God's image." But here, as elsewhere, Jewish and Christian thinkers find in revelation the confirmation, but not the root, of their philosophical affirmation of the nature and value of the human person—an affirmation found clearly (though not unmixed with error) in the philosophies of Plato and Aristotle, as well as in the thought of the greatest Roman jurists. Christian philosophers in particular

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hold that there are sound philosophical reasons—having to do with the contingency and intelligibility of the universe—to judge that God is personal in nature, that is, able to envisage and choose between intelligible options.

In concluding, let me return to that point about the nature of practical reasoning on which even Prof. Dever regrets the established orthodoxy of secular liberalism. He is part of a "moral realist" movement in contemporary analytic philosophy that seeks to dislodge "the twin denial of the motivational power of reason and of epistemic access to objective normative facts" that is a central "legacy" of British Empiricism. As Prof. Dever himself recognizes, this makes him something of an unorthodox secularist. Fine. I wholeheartedly approve his heresy. But until this movement gains the upper hand, it remains the case that secularist orthodoxy, on its own terms, "possesses no resources for answering the question 'Why should I respect the rights of others?'" And, should it succeed in overcoming the Humean hegemony, it will be interesting to see whether the logic of moral realism begins to undermine the practical atheism, materialism, and, with them, the moral-political liberalism that are the defining features of contemporary secularism.

For my part, I am hopeful that people who come to see that the Humean tradition has been wrong, and that the Judeo-Christian tradition has been right all along, about the possibilities of free choice, rationally motivated action, and objective moral truth, will soon come to the realization that these possibilities point beyond themselves to a more-than-merely-human source of meaning and value, a divine ground of human intelligence and free will who freely discloses Himself to us when we are prepared to open our minds—and hearts—to Him.

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From the Kitchen Window

Chipmunk chewing on a mushroom
In late May, late afternoon,
Amid patches of nervous sun,
They tell us the galaxies couldn't care less
About little nothings such as this.
It may be so,
And it may be so
Our little chipmunk here
Has his own ideas
On what to explore
And what to ignore.

D. Q. McInerny

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The "Dualities" of Thomas Jefferson

George McKenna

Jefferson: Political Writings. Edited by Joyce Appleby and Terence Ball. *Cambridge University Press. 623 pp. $59.95.*

American Virtues: Thomas Jefferson on the Character of a Free People. By Jean M. Yarbrough. *University Press of Kansas. 256 pp. $35.*

Thomas Jefferson and the Education of a Citizen. Edited by James Gilreath. *Library of Congress. 383 pp. $41.*

If, during his thirty years of service as revolutionary publicist, Governor, Congressman, diplomat, Secretary of State, Vice President, and two-term President, Thomas Jefferson had done nothing except acquire the Louisiana Territory—a piece of this continent larger than the whole United States at the time, purchased from Napoleon for $15 million—he would be remembered as a great statesman. But he did much more. With James Madison, he organized a new political party that bridged disparate regions and branches of government; he modernized the laws of his own state and set an example for other states with his Virginia statute of religious freedom; he was a force behind two political upheavals, one in 1776 and one in 1800, that renewed American political life without the orgies of bloodshed and recrimination that usually accompany such events; he broadened political participation and laid the groundwork for a democratized presidency; and in his retirement he founded the University of Virginia, supervising everything from its curriculum and hiring of faculty to the plan and architecture of its campus.

But it is Jefferson's writings, which he continued to produce almost two decades after his retirement from government, for which he is still best remembered. John Adams said that Jefferson was chosen to write the Declaration of Independence because of his "peculiar felicity of expression." It was a wise choice. The majestic phraseology of the Declaration—its opening invocation of "the Laws of Nature and of Nature's God," its assertion that "all men are created equal" and endowed by God with "unalienable Rights," its insistence that just governments derive their powers from "the consent of the governed"—has become an essential part of America's moral grammar. Almost all of his writings, from his official pronouncements to his private letters, are infused with a gracefulness, a "felicity," that makes his pronouncements roll off the tongue. "The will of the people is the only legitimate foundation of government." "I know of no safe depositary of the ultimate powers of the society but the people themselves." Jefferson was the great lyricist of American democracy, and at their best his words have inspired generations of Americans to love their country and sacrifice for its well-being.

The problem is that over the course of his long life Jefferson's words went in so many different directions, so often at odds with his acts and even with themselves, that is hard to pin him down. He loved democracy, but he also agreed with John Adams that America should be led by a "natural *aristoi*," and he wanted public education to "rake from the rubble" an aristocracy of "talent and virtue." He hated political parties ("If I could not go to heaven but with a party, I would not go there at all"), but then founded a new party and declared

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that England's "party division of Whig and Tory is the most wholesome which can exist in any government." He favored a strict construction of the Constitution and worried about excessive presidential power, yet as President he acquired Louisiana Territory without prior congressional authorization and ruled it like a monarch. He championed freedom of the press ("Where the press is free, and every man able to read, all is safe"), but while President he suggested to the governor of Pennsylvania, a fellow Republican, that a few well-chosen prosecutions of Federalist newspapers would have a "wholesome effect in restoring the integrity of the press."

He said things for the occasion, and when the occasion changed he said other things. He worked in epigrams. Some of these epigrams, like his assertion that "the mass of mankind has not been born with saddles on their backs," are unquestionable; some are highly questionable; and some, such as his "Adam and Eve" defense of the French Revolution, are crazy. ("Rather than it should have failed, I would have seen half the earth desolated. Were there but an Adam and Eve left in every country, and left free, it would be better than as it now is.") It is difficult, perhaps impossible, to extract from all these pronouncements any final Jeffersonian synthesis.

Three recently published works may offer at least some threads of continuity. Last year historian Joyce Appleby and political scientist Terence Ball edited a useful paperback edition of selected political writings by Jefferson, one of a series of texts in the history of political thought published by Cambridge University Press. Of necessity it duplicates much of what was in the elegant and more complete edition of Jefferson's writings published in 1984 by the Library of America, but this new compilation may be handier, especially for classroom use. Instead of printing the selections chronologically, as the Library of America edition did, it arranges them thematically under fourteen different headings, beginning with "A Private Man in Public Life" and ending with "Relations Between Generations." This can help students test Jefferson for consistency as they read through his various statements on these themes.

Jean M. Yarbrough, a professor of government at Bowdoin College, recently attempted just such a test in her ambitious work on Jefferson's thought, *American Virtues: Thomas Jefferson on the Character of a Free People.* In writing it, Yarbrough undertook a double challenge. The first was to find a theme large enough to contain the sprawling Jeffersonian oeuvre. The second was to write an appreciative, if not uncritical, *conservative* treatment of Jefferson. Here is a real challenge. Yarbrough is a social conservative, of the Leo Strauss-Allan Bloom school, and Thomas Jefferson was anything but. He hated the conservatives of his day, the old-school Federalists and Tories, and refused to let them teach, or even be read, at his beloved University of Virginia. Moreover, his whole mindset was one of hostility toward tradition, authority, and religion (or at least orthodox trinitarian Christianity), the three great pillars of conservatism.

Yarbrough's way of meeting both these challenges was to make "virtue" the central theme of her book. Jefferson did indeed write a lot about virtue, so the theme ties together much of what he said during his long life. And virtue, as William Bennett has demonstrated, is very popular with conservatives. By focusing on Jefferson's approach to virtue, then, Yarbrough is able to map out a conservative path into his thought.

What did Jefferson think about virtue? He was for it, of course, but not for the kind of self-sacrificing "republican virtue" embraced by the more severe patriots of antiquity. Jefferson's view, derived from Scottish "common sense" philosophy, is that in the appropriate political framework the happiness of the individual and the happiness of society are entirely compatible. The argument goes like this. A benevolent Creator has endowed us with a moral sense and has so arranged our nature that we receive pleasure from doing good to others; the exercise of our social virtues is in our interest. Our happiness depends in part on the happiness of others. Yarbrough believes this argument is a good corrective to the present-day obsession with "rights," which threatens to dissolve society "into a mass of isolated and ever more powerless individuals and warring tribes." Jefferson rooted his approach to rights in a concept of man as a moral and rational being, subject to natural and divine law, "in contrast to contemporary liberals, who are often uneasy with the very idea of human nature because it serves as a limit on individual freedom."

But, as communitarians such as Mary Ann Glendon have complained, Jefferson's remarks on rights say very little about limiting individual freedom. Far from putting a damper on irresponsible "rights talk," Jefferson's much-quoted sayings may have encouraged it. Yarbrough acknowledges that Jefferson might have given some people the idea that they can interpret rights "in whatever manner they wish," but insists that the "deeper meaning" of his thought holds back such tendencies.

Yarbrough spends much of her book trying to ferret out this "deeper meaning." "At first sight," she will remark, Jefferson says this, but "it seems likely" that he really means that. To an objection raised by John Adams, Jefferson chose not to respond. "But he could have replied that . . ." These are Straussean dialectics,

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except that Strauss used them on philosophers who could bear their weight. Jefferson's philosophy, pieced together from his occasional statements, tends to fall apart when subjected to that kind of analysis. It is hard, for example, to reconcile his declaration of unbounded faith in the people with his denunciation of the "swinish multitude." Or his call for legislative supremacy with his warning that "one hundred and seventy-three despots would surely be as oppressive as one." Unexplained contradictions sometimes pop up even in the same speech. In his First Inaugural Address he insisted that "though the will of the majority is in all cases to prevail, that will to be rightful must be reasonable; [and] the minority possess their equal rights, which equal law must protect." If the majority's will is in all cases to prevail, how can there be enforceable laws protecting minorities? There may be an answer to this paradox, but Jefferson supplies no clues.

Yarbrough is well aware of the discrepancies in Jefferson's thought; she cites several examples herself, and gamely tries to resolve them. Indeed, she seems to think that their very existence is evidence that Jefferson wanted a "middle way" for America: between selfish individualism and hairshirt self-denial, between the impoverished republics of old and the soft commercial societies of Europe, between unbridled majority rule and (what she thinks is today's extreme) excessive catering to minorities. In proper Straussean fashion, she is looking for syntheses. Her attempt to build a conservative argument out of the fragments of Jefferson's liberalism is fascinating, but in the end it is not very convincing.

Another attempt to get a handle on Jefferson is a book published by the Library of Congress that ruminates on his approach to education. *Thomas Jefferson and the Education of a Citizen*, edited by James Gilreath, a former American history specialist at the Library, consists of papers delivered in 1993 to commemorate the 250th anniversary of Jefferson's birth, along with commentaries by such luminaries as political scientist Benjamin Barber and the late historian C. Vann Woodward.

Though the compilation breaks little new ground on Jefferson's thought, some of its contributors offer their own provocative interpretations. Historian Michael Grossberg thinks that Jefferson's "most inspiring legacy" was his "utopian vision wherein each generation is able to create its own version of a just and fair society." This sounds a little like the famous "mystery" passage in *Planned Parenthood v. Casey*: "At the heart of liberty is the right to define one's own concept of existence, of meaning, of the universe, and of the mystery of human life."

Did Jefferson really think that way? Yes and no. It is true that he talked about the earth belonging "to the living" and each generation being "as independent as the one preceding, as that was of all which had gone before." But it is not clear how much of this generational relativism he was ready to countenance in his own life. In his relationship with his children and grandchildren, he was constantly micromanaging their education. In this collection, Jennings Wagoner, Jr., an education professor at the University of Virginia, provides some revealing examples. In one of his typical letters to Martha, one of his two surviving daughters, Jefferson wrote: "I am anxious to know what books you read, what tunes you can play, and to receive specimens of your drawing." He even went to the length of telling his children and grandchildren that his continued love for them was conditional upon their progress in studies.

These demands for the "pursuit of knowledge" went beyond making sure that the children work hard at their studies; Jefferson was careful to shape the content of what they studied. As Wagoner reminds us, Jefferson wrote in his *Notes on the State of Virginia* that histories, not Bibles, should be put into the hands of children, so that "their memories may be stored with the most useful facts" from ancient and modern times. In educational matters, Jefferson saw little use for "the fourth 'r,'" religion. He expected that by the end of the nineteenth century most Americans would be Unitarians—like him. That was how he raised his children and how he wanted his grandchildren raised: to value Jesus as an ethical teacher but eschew any thoughts about miracles, dogma, or metaphysics. And he projected this vision beyond his own family: at the University of Virginia, he left no room for the study of metaphysics or theology, and explicitly banned the teaching of any principles that, "in the common opinion," were "incompatible" with the Constitution of the United States or the State of Virginia. This despite his lofty proclamations that the university "will be based on the illimitable freedom of the human mind," and that "we are not afraid to follow the truth wherever it may lead." Each generation was to be independent of the one preceding, but not until Jefferson got done with their minds.

Perhaps Jefferson's strategy of control through education was of a piece with his distrust of government: the more internal controls there are through education, the less need for government control. This is an argument Horace Mann and other proponents of public education made in the early part of the nineteenth century. As external controls are lifted, Mann argued, reason and conscience need to be better trained so that "these nobler faculties can be ele-

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vated into dominion and supremacy over the appetites and passions."

In his comments, political scientist Benjamin Barber seems at first to be going this way in his interpretation of Jefferson. But then he veers off into strange territory. He offers the dubious proposition that Jefferson "preferred education to representation as democracy's guarantor." (Jefferson was enthusiastic about local democracy, but I know of no evidence that he thought people should govern directly, without representatives, at the state or national level.) Then he compares Jefferson to Leon Trotsky as an advocate of "permanent revolution," and ends up with the conclusion that Jefferson was some kind of postmodernist. "Democrats and egalitarians owe him a debt less as a historical figure than as a devotee of an antifoundationalist participatory politics of the present and the future." To the charge that Jefferson often contradicted his principles, Barber replies that such criticism misses the point; the real Jefferson was a man of political participation, not static principles. "Jefferson's great utility to modern democrats was his recognition . . . that politics always trumps principle." We might think that in recent years our democracy has had enough of politics trumping principle, but Barber is convinced that that is what democracy is all about. "Democracy enjoins constant, permanent motion . . . a moveable feast that affords each generation room for new appetites and tastes."

Jefferson was often prodigal in his household expenditures, but his public style was austere, even puritanical. It is hard to imagine him associating popular government with the servicing of appetites or the provision of moveable feasts. And he certainly would not want politics to trump principle. Jefferson was a great believer in principle; it is just that his principles could go one way or the other depending on the situation.

The most famous or notorious of all the Jeffersonian contradictions is that the man who declared that "all men are created equal" kept slaves. Jefferson was well aware of the contradiction and agonized over it: "I tremble for my country when I reflect that God is just." His first draft of the Declaration of Independence contained a section condemning slavery (he blamed it on the British), and in his early years he entertained various schemes for compensated emancipation, though he later grew more passive and fatalistic about the South's "peculiar institution."

Jefferson got entangled in the same historic tragedy that snared some of the best men of his generation, including George Washington. But there were differences. First, Washington freed all of his slaves in his will, while most of Jefferson's remained in bondage at his death, held in partial payment of the mountainous debts he had accumulated. Second, and more importantly, Jefferson increased his burden of guilt by writing, and publishing, some of the ugliest remarks ever made about blacks.

There is a danger of presentism in characterizing as "racist" any comments made more than two hundred years ago. By today's sensitive standards, nearly all whites of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, including Lincoln and the abolitionists, were racists; their attitudes toward blacks ranged from contemptuous to condescending. But, judging from what is left of the written record, Jefferson's views on race went far beyond those of any of his contemporaries. In one section of his *Notes on Virginia* he tried out ideas that anticipated the most repellent features of what was later called "scientific" racism. He saw deep "natural" divisions between the races that condemned blacks to eternal inferiority in everything from brains to physical beauty. Whether their skin color came from their bile, their blood, "or from . . . some other secretion," it made them ugly. They smelled. The men were sexually attracted to white women over those of their own race just as "the Oranootan [is] for the black woman over those of his own species." Whatever their environment, blacks were incapable of ever attaining the intellectual or cultural level of whites.

What made Jefferson say such things? In his comments, humanities professor James Oakes suggests a motive at once political and psychological. Jefferson wanted to free the slaves, but then to deport them. At some point, though, his conscience must have bothered him. Isn't it unjust to deport people who have lived in America for generations and have already suffered injustice? Why not free them and then educate them so that they could become coequals and fellow citizens? That was Jefferson's approach to poor and uneducated whites; and it was the main motive behind his proposal to create a system of tax-supported public schools. But Jefferson, Oakes thinks, "recoiled in horror" at the thought of ever associating on equal terms with blacks. Jefferson's very faith in the transformative power of education became threatening to him in their case. The purpose of Jefferson's racist screed, then, was to reassure himself and others that blacks, no matter what their education, could never be brought to the level of whites.

Oakes could be reading more into Jefferson than is warranted. Jefferson may have had no motive beyond that of speculating about race; he advanced his notion of black inferiority "as a suspicion only." It may be that the causality went the other way, that it was Jefferson's observations of racial differences, however distorted or prejudiced they were, that caused him to advocate black deportation. In any case, as C. Vann Woodward

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points out in his commentary, Jefferson later wrote to various French correspondents that blacks in their "moral sense" were the equals of people in every race, that in time they could become intellectually equal to whites, and that he hoped "to see a complete refutation of doubts I have myself entertained."

So there we have it: another Jeffersonian turnaround. Woodward attributes these "dualities," as he delicately puts it, to Jefferson's busy life. "He was not a full-time closeted philosopher-scholar on a Virginia mountain but a fully engaged public figure up to his ears in politics . . . from the 1770s to the 1820s." Actually, from his retirement from the presidency on March 4, 1809 until his death in 1826, Jefferson *was* nearly a full-time philosopher. In any case, many of his colleagues were also busy politicians, without being quite so ambidextrous in their opinions.

There may be another contradiction in Jefferson, one that is more disturbing than anything purely verbal—a disjunction between Jefferson's public persona and his real life. Down through the years the story had been told of children Jefferson had by Sally Hemings, the young slave who was the daughter of his father-in-law, John Wayles. The story was first published by James Callender, a venomous scandalmonger whom Jefferson once helped support financially when Callender was attacking Alexander Hamilton. In 1802, motivated by what he felt was Jefferson's ingratitude, Callender turned on his patron, alleging that Sally Hemings was Jefferson's concubine and had borne him several children. Until recently the allegation has been treated dismissively by most Jefferson scholars because of its questionable origins, because there *was* no solid proof for it, and because it seemed out of character, being, as Dumas Malone put it, "virtually unthinkable in a man of Jefferson's moral standards and habitual conduct."

Fast forward to 1998, when a report in *Nature* magazine, based on DNA tests of Hemings' descendants, concluded that Jefferson was probably the father of at least one of her children. Suddenly the media blazed with declarations—some by former Jefferson defenders—that Jefferson's paternity was now a proven fact, a conclusion the principal researcher for the study went out of his way to deny. But the DNA study did add another piece to an already credible body of evidence that Jefferson had been sexually involved with Hemings. A year before the study was published, law professor Annette Gordon-Reed highlighted several other pieces, including the fact that on at least one occasion (more, if we believe the account of the victim) Jefferson had deviated from his "moral standards and habitual conduct" by trying to force his affections on the wife of one his friends. Gordon-Reed also noted the fact (first discovered by Dumas Malone) that Jefferson, who was often away from Monticello, was always there nine months before Sally gave birth.

If, added to the DNA study, this makes a strong case that Hemings was Jefferson's mistress (and I think it does), how are we to reconcile this with Jefferson's view of blacks as physically unattractive, foul-smelling, and mentally inferior? What did he see in this black woman? Contemporary accounts describe her as "almost white," so perhaps his comments about blacks don't apply. But if she wasn't black, then why, following Jefferson's own racist logic, was she a slave? Or was that why he freed her and her children in his will? It seems we are left with this conclusion: having no further use for his wife's half-sister, Jefferson let her go. These are harsh words, but they are not aimed at diminishing Jefferson's status as a statesman or—what I have focused on here—his great power as a writer. What they should do is to remind us of the darker side of Jefferson, the reckless inconsistency in his life as well as his thought.

But perhaps this misses the point. To expect consistency from Jefferson is to expect something that was not in his line of work. He dealt in words, but he was neither a philosopher nor exactly a rhetorician. He was more like a poet, in love with the sound and feel of language. Historian Carl Becker once speculated that that was one reason Jefferson was such a poor speaker. He always wanted to get just the right tone in his sentences; a person like that "instinctively wishes to cross out what he has just said, and say it over again in a different way—and this is what he often does, to the confusion of his audience."

Jefferson himself offered a revealing glimpse of this tendency when, a year before his death, he said in a letter to Henry Lee that the Declaration of Independence was "intended to be an expression of the American mind, and to give to that expression the proper tone and spirit called for by the occasion." Tone, spirit—when these were needed, Jefferson's poetic style, his "peculiar felicity of expression," served his country well. It can still serve to inspire us. But to try to find in his writings any firm guidance for the future, any unambiguous markings that might get us started into this new century, is to seek something that simply isn't there. FT

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Books In Review

The Darkness in Plato's Cave

IN PLATO'S CAVE. By ALVIN KERNAN. *Yale University Press. 309 pp. $30.*

***Reviewed by* Phillip E. Johnson**

AFTER GROWING UP in poverty in rural Wyoming, Alvin Kernan joined the prewar Navy in 1941 to get a start in life. He began as an enlisted man serving on one of the aircraft carriers that were so fortuitously away at sea when the Japanese struck at Pearl Harbor. He survived the sinking of the carrier *Hornet* in 1942, and the following year won the Navy Cross for flying as a gunner in the very first night carrier air skirmish. (Lt. Commander Edward "Butch" O'Hare, the celebrated air ace for whom Chicago's airport is named, died in this action.) The eminent military historian John Keegan praised *Crossing the Line*, Kernan's 1994 memoir of those long-ago adventures, as "an extraordinary book, most of all for the sense it conveys of the isolation of the individual in an enormous, impersonal organization into which, nevertheless, danger might at any instant intrude with an acutely personal immediacy." The modest war hero probably could have published a best-seller in 1945, but he chose to tell his story only much later, when it seemed right to make his children aware of their heritage.

Kernan's best Navy friend was an aspiring actor named Richard Boone, later the star of television's *Have Gun, Will Travel*. After the war Kernan briefly enjoyed the bohemian life in New York with Boone, but his own inclination was to take advantage of the GI Bill so he could pursue the life of reason. During his Navy years Kernan had discarded the Catholicism of his early upbringing because "war had pushed me over a threshold of belief into a hard materialism, and I could never go back." This seems unreflective for such an intelligent man, considering that the cruelty of war is no modern discovery and many others have actually *found* God in similar circumstances. Kernan wryly describes himself as a naive rationalist:

> I was one of those who feel that the most satisfactory end in life is knowledge; not money or power or prestige, but an understanding of people and the world they inhabit. . . . I had in my innocence developed a view of knowledge that will seem laughable in our skeptical days. Read the right books and listen to the right people, think in the most intense and logical fashion . . . and all the darkness of Plato's cave of illusions would burn away in the bright sun of understanding. I did not think that truth remained to be discovered; I believed that in the main it already had been found and that I just had not yet been informed of the results.

In pursuit of that faith Kernan obtained his undergraduate education at Williams College and his Ph.D. in literature at Yale. He went on to become a tenured professor at Yale, Provost of Yale University, and Dean of the Graduate School at Princeton. He was for many years an outstanding teacher, widely respected as a scholar and academic statesman. In retirement, he dispenses largesse for the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation. His academic career was successful far beyond anything he could have imagined as a schoolboy or seaman.

EVEN SO, *In Plato's Cave* is a catalog of disappointments, of promising things gone horribly wrong. Kernan climbed almost to the top of the greasy academic pole, and found there not the bright sun of understanding but a greater darkness. The students who ought to have sought wisdom and learning turned instead to hedonism and politicized irrationality. Eventually the faculty replaced the noble principles that had attracted Kernan with ignoble but profitable fads and power ideologies. What went wrong?

Kernan was a graduate student in 1951 when William F. Buckley, Jr.'s *God and Man at Yale* created a sensation by (in Kernan's words) arguing "provocatively and brilliantly that the administration and faculty of Yale, despite Yale's having been founded on religion and being still supported by free enterprise, were systematically teaching atheism and socialism in the classroom." Kernan saw Buckley's attack merely as an incident in the anti-Communist politics of the time, and implicitly certified its accuracy while dismissing it from serious consideration. Classroom ridicule of religion was merely harmless joking, Kernan thought, and it was absurd to imagine that liberals could ever violate the academic freedom of conservatives.

> We children of the Depression, raised in the Age of Roosevelt, were so indoctrinated with liberal views that we took them as simply given and obvious truth. They *were* the truths that academic freedom made it possible to teach. It never occurred to us to doubt that Hiss was innocent, that McCarthy was a total liar, that the state was the best means for remedying all evils; and so we joined with

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everyone else in reviling and laughing at Buckley.

Later, the reviling laughter was at the expense of Kernan and his friends. It was one thing for war veterans with their feet on the ground to mock God and tradition, but the pampered youth of the next generation made rebellion into a way of life. If the state was capable of remedying all evils, why not demand that it complete the job without delay?

Utopian nihilism fathered such bizarre upheavals as the Bobby Seale episode at Yale in 1970. Seale was a leader of the Black Panther Party, a politico/gangster operation typical of the times. New Haven prosecutors indicted Seale for the torture and murder of a party member suspected of being a police informant, and the Panther supporters responded with agitprop that directed attention toward general accusations of racism and oppression and hence away from the mundane question of whether Seale had committed the murder. Many of Yale's best and brightest students endorsed the Panther cause with enthusiasm. Most of the faculty either jumped on the bandwagon or ran for cover. As mobs converged on the city and the campus, Kernan learned to appreciate how vulnerable the university was to violence, and how eager many of the brightest students and faculty were to attack university leaders if they did anything "provocative" such as characterizing the protesters' demands as unreasonable.

Provost Kernan was no more able to prevent the debacle at Yale than he had been to prevent the sinking of the *Hornet*. In both cases he did his duty, but forces far beyond his control made disaster inevitable. As second-in-command at Yale, Kernan sat next to President Kingman Brewster at the faculty meeting in which Brewster impulsively tried to placate the rebels by saying that he was "skeptical of the ability of black revolutionaries to achieve a fair trial anywhere in the United States." Of course the radicals who despised Yale's liberal intellectualism saw that sop to their ideology as encouragement to step up the pressure, and conservatives wrote off Brewster as an appeaser not worth defending.

The atmosphere of the period was symbolized by an incident in which Latino art students imported some toughs to frighten administrators into giving them special treatment. A scholarly administrator named Charles Taylor tried to explain to the delegation that universities work by reason, not force. Kernan recounts that "the imports from the Bronx found this talk ludicrous and made their feelings clear with many profanities. Charlie stiffened, and the scene turned ugly, with very real threats to hold him out the window and drop him into the courtyard below (no campus police had been brought to the meeting 'lest their presence be provocative'). A student photographer made a film of the incident, and Yale audiences cheered the bullies when it was shown at local theaters." Kernan explains that he tells this painful story only to suggest "how little at this time the university could count on some of its own to share in the defense of its traditional values." Perhaps the students would have been more willing to defend Yale's traditional values if the faculty had not made it a practice to mock those values in the classroom.

KERNAN WAS ALSO the Yale administrator who appointed the deconstructionist Paul de Man as professor of literature. This decision was reasonable at the time, de Man being a brilliant and charismatic teacher, but in hindsight it seems like another betrayal of Yale's values. De Man's ideology was inherently friendly to totalitarianism, because it denied the existence of objective truth and made meaning the province of readers, including demagogues wielding power ideologies. That literary theory took on a sinister aspect just after de Man's death, when historical researchers discovered that he was writing Nazi journalism in Belgium during the years when the young Alvin Kernan was defending democracy in the Pacific.

De Man's Nazism didn't shock the real nihilists, who know that totalitarians of the left and right share a loathing for "bourgeois values" (a.k.a. truth, beauty, and goodness). But critics of deconstructionism wondered if de Man's literary theory might have been a subtle defense of his Nazism. If words inherently don't mean anything, then it could be argued that de Man's Nazi words didn't mean anything incriminating. Kernan slam-dunks his response to such rationalization: "If there is one basic axiom of

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deconstruction, it surely is *Il n'y a rien hors du texte*—'everything is a text,' everything, that is, is made up and unreal—but far from there being nothing outside of the de Man text, *everything* was out there, waiting to be called back into reality by the awesome power of words to retain and control meaning."

Kernan hoped to find calmer waters when he went to Princeton in 1973 as Dean of the Graduate School, but he soon wearied of the constant legal hassles that preoccupied university administrators. He was not much happier after 1978 as a member of Princeton's English Department, because the spirit of the times was alien to him. The way to get ahead in literature was to gain attention by pursuing some fad to the limits of its logic and beyond. Kernan realized that his time was past when he happened to see a Ph.D. dissertation that was being rushed surreptitiously through the department, the theme of which was to read a bizarre astrological code into Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*. To him it was as if the physics department had approved a dissertation promoting witchcraft. Kernan protested all the way up and down the line, but the other literature professors no longer cared about his quaint standards. That wacky dissertation symbolized a culture of academic malpractice that could never be acceptable to a man who had once believed that the university was where all the darkness of Plato's cave of illusions would burn away in the bright sun of understanding.

WHEN KERNAN recognized that he was beaten, he retreated to the sanctuary of the library stacks, there to labor over scholarly books likely to appeal only to a few other literary specialists. His two splendid books of memoirs show him to be a brave and decent citizen of his country and his universities, as well as a good-natured raconteur of folly who doesn't mind turning his wit against himself. In retirement he reflected that "the gyroscope at the center of any educational system . . . is its dominant conception of knowledge," and in literature the ruling definition of knowledge implied that "there are no facts, only interpretations."

The reduction of knowledge to interpretation, and ultimately to economics and power politics, was partly the unintended consequence of the philosophy that the young Alvin Kernan brought back from the war. It is too bad that the professors of Kernan's generation, admirable as they

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were in so many respects, chose to build their literary castle on a foundation of sand, so that it could not hope to stand against the ideological storms.

What Price Reform?

THE REFORM OF THE PAPACY: THE COSTLY CALL TO CHRISTIAN UNITY. By JOHN R. QUINN. *Crossroad/Herder & Herder. 189 pp. $19.95.*

***Reviewed by* Avery Dulles**

IN HIS 1995 encyclical *Ut Unum Sint*, Pope John Paul II invited suggestions from Christians not in union with Rome regarding ways of exercising the papal office that might facilitate reunion. Interpreting this invitation as addressed to Catholics as well, Archbishop John R. Quinn, in his 1996 Campion Lecture at Oxford University on "The Exercise of the Primacy and the Costly Call to Unity," proposed a series of reforms that are taken up at greater length in the present volume. The main thrust of all the proposals is to correct what Quinn regards as undue centralization. As remedies he advocates greater collegiality, subsidiarity, and legitimate diversity, all of which, in his opinion, were mandated by Vatican II.

As one area where reform is needed, Archbishop Quinn points to the regional episcopal conferences. He argues—correctly in my opinion—that they have a true theological status as collegial organs, and—more dubiously—that they ought to have doctrinal authority. He objects to the 1998 ruling of the Holy See that particular conferences may not make binding doctrinal declarations unless they speak unanimously or obtain a two-thirds majority together with the approval (*recognitio*) of Rome. This ruling is in Quinn's opinion a "signal of distrust."

A second subject of Quinn's dissatisfaction is the Synod of Bishops. As now constituted, it serves as an organ for expressing the consensus of the member bishops and for advising the Holy See. Quinn would like it to have a deliberative, and not merely consultative, vote, with the result that its decrees would have juridical force throughout the Church.

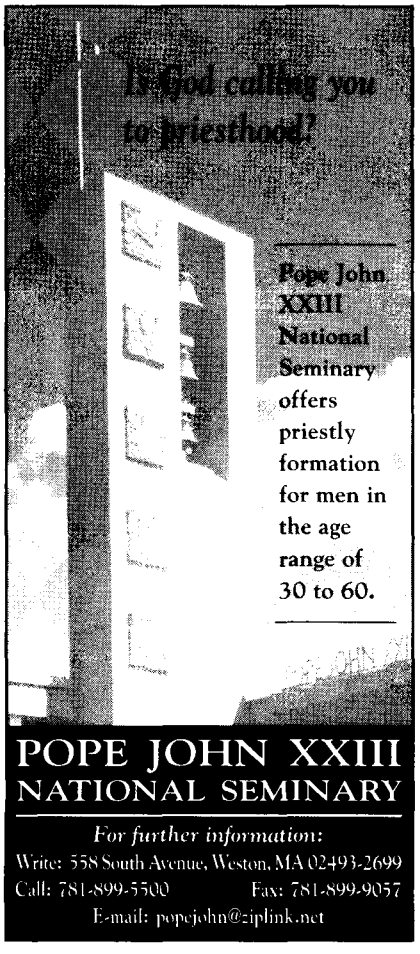
Quinn also objects to the appointment of bishops by Rome without a major role for the local church and the regional conference of bishops. He urges the adoption of something like the system proposed by the Canon Law Society of America (CLSA) in 1973, which gave a diocesan committee control over the names to be submitted, and allowed Rome to make its selection among the proposed candidates only after the diocesan list had been reviewed by the bishops of the province and by a committee of the national conference. The CLSA proposals were not accepted.

Quinn is further dissatisfied with the College of Cardinals. He has three main criticisms: that the cardinals constitute a college within the College of Bishops, thus turning the latter into a college of second rank; that the College of Cardinals is hard to fit into the structures of Eastern Christianity; and that the election of the Pope by cardinals rather than by presidents of episcopal conferences, together with other bishops, religious, and laity, is ecumenically unacceptable. Quinn would also like to see the diocese of Rome represented in the election process.

QUINN'S SEVEREST criticisms are directed against his final target, the Roman Curia. Its dicasteries, he complains, involve themselves in details that could better be handled by local authorities. In this connection, he rejects the Roman supervision of liturgical translations. Some Curia officials, in his view, resist the reforms of the Second Vatican Council and encourage the restoration of the preconciliar Latin liturgy. The presence of so many bishops in curial offices, he adds, is an abuse of the sacrament of Holy Orders.

After examining various proposals for reforming the Curia that were made at Vatican II, Quinn repeats the proposal that he himself made in his Oxford address—namely, that the Pope establish a commission headed by three presidents (the president of an episcopal conference, a lay person, and a representative of the Curia)—to come up within three years with a plan for restructuring that would be voted on by the presidents of episcopal conferences and presented to the Pope for approval.

AVERY DULLES, S.J., *holds the Laurence J. McGinley Chair at Fordham University.*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ALTHOUGH MANY OF the criticisms and proposals in this book have been made previously by other authors, they command special attention as coming from an archbishop who has taken part in several synods of bishops and has served as president of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops. It would be hard to imagine that none of the complaints is valid or that all of the proposals are unsound. But in such a delicate and complex area, great caution is required. My own impression is that Rome now plays an indispensable role in safeguarding the apostolic tradition, in maintaining the unity of the universal Church, and in keeping the conferences and the diocesan bishops from assuming inordinate power.

What about episcopal conferences? One might legitimately hesitate to give them and their presidents as much weight as Quinn does. Most Catholics, I believe, would be very unhappy if their particular conference of bishops could, by a majority vote, enact binding doctrinal decisions without any approval from Rome. How could the faithful of one region or nation be bound to believe doctrines that were not taught in the universal Church?

I have similar reservations about Quinn's proposals for the Synod of Bishops. As presently structured, its assemblies are brief, lasting two weeks or a month, and include only a relatively small number of bishops, elected or appointed on an ad hoc basis. Such meetings have their value as a sounding board for new ideas and as a source of suggestions to the Pope. But I cannot see the advantage in giving such assemblies the power to issue laws and doctrinal determinations for the universal Church. Although the conferral of such powers would undoubtedly make the meetings of the synod more interesting, the net result would be to burden the Catholic people.

As for the College of Cardinals, it has frequently been restructured and could still be radically changed, even abolished. But it does function as a corps of highly trusted senior prelates, whose opinions the Pope can occasionally seek out, as he did in the preparations for the current Great Jubilee. Since it won its freedom from control by civil powers, the College of Cardinals has functioned remarkably well in papal elections. The cardinals—especially if they meet periodically in consistories—know one another's aptitudes and limitations better than do most non-cardinals.

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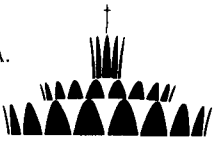

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Concerning the appointment of bishops, improvements are always in order. The present system has not prevented all mistakes. But the Holy See, acting with the advice of apostolic nuncios and with the help of confidential consultations, is able to draw on a much larger pool of candidates than would be known in the local church. If nominations had to come from a diocesan committee, there would be a real danger of diocesan inbreeding. This would be particularly harmful in dioceses that have a one-sided orientation.

QUINN'S CRITIQUES OF the Roman Curia are not entirely unwarranted. He dwells on weaknesses that are typical of all bureaucracies. But it would be false to imagine that the majority of curial officers are hungry for power and that they intervene without serious cause. In many of the cases to which Quinn refers, Rome has acted in response to the pleas of Catholics who felt that their bishops or episcopal conferences were failing to protect the faith and devotion of the people—for example, by allowing defective translations to pass into official liturgical books.

In general, Quinn seems to present collegiality very much as though the College of Bishops were a kind of parliament, designed to offset the dangers of papal monarchy. According to the true theological conception, there is no conflict between primacy and collegiality. Each needs and serves the other. Nothing requires that the Pope, in exercising his primacy, be bound by the majority opinion of the bishops. He is obliged to exercise the special charisms of his office. If John XXIII had felt bound by the preponderant views of either his Curia or the world episcopate, Vatican II would probably not have been convened. Since Quinn relies heavily on Vatican II, he is also indebted to the relative autonomy of the Pope.

Several minor errors may be noted. Quinn refers to a commentary on the concluding paragraphs of the 1989 Profession of Faith as a commentary on the 1998 *motu proprio, Ad Tuendam Fidem.* More importantly, he asserts that one becomes a member of the College of Bishops by episcopal ordination and that bishops, once ordained, belong irrevocably to the college and "can never be placed outside it." Nowhere in his book does Quinn allude to hierarchical communion, which is an essential condition for membership in the College of Bishops, and which can be lost by any bishop.

IN COMPARISON with the Oxford lecture, this book seems less forthright. It makes no mention of many controversial examples that appeared in the lecture, such as the approval of the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, contraception, priestly celibacy, the ordination of women, the practice of general absolution, and the treatment of divorced and remarried Catholics. One wonders whether the real purpose of the proposed structural reforms is to obtain a reconsideration of such doctrinal and disciplinary issues. Does this book contain an unstated agenda? Even if it does, it can still be useful as a reminder that the structures of the Church need to be kept under constant review. But no reform of the papal office should undermine its capacity to safeguard the unity of the whole flock of Christ in the truth of revelation.

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Ethnicity and Identity

HISPANIC/LATINO IDENTITY. By JORGE J. E. GRACIA. *Oxford University Press. 227 pp. $24.95.*

***Reviewed by* J. L. A. Garcia**

THE CONTROVERSY IN the United States over multiculturalism in and beyond education has now faded—perhaps because Nathan Glazer is

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right that "we're all multiculturalists now." Yet that controversy was merely the leading edge of an intellectual movement exalting ethnic culture and affiliation, oftentimes as the core of the self and its identity. Against liberal neo-Kantian proponents of epistemological "veils" and other devices for abstracting us from our ordinary entanglements, communitarians insist that each of us must do his thinking from within, and as a member of, a particular community and tradition. Sometimes they embrace the strong ethnic ties that undergird many of the most familiar communities and traditions.

This phenomenon has percolated down from the university to the public schools. Anyone with a child in school has probably heard of one or another ethnic festival in which children are urged to "celebrate diversity" by interviewing a grandparent about the customs of the old country, dressing up in their ethnic group's costume, or bringing in a dish distinctive of their ancestral homeland's native cuisine. A number of curmudgeons (conservative and liberal) have decried this de-emphasis on what unites us trans-ethnically as Americans, but while they have gained some sympathetic notice, pluralism remains the order of the day.

ONTO THIS SCENE enters Jorge J. E. Gracia's magisterial new book, *Hispanic/Latino Identity*. Gracia is an expert in medieval metaphysics and a noted metaphysical theorist himself, blending scholastic with analytic techniques and arguments. Where others chatter about "identity politics," with scant understanding of either term, Gracia undertakes a careful, metaphysically nuanced, and informed discussion of ethnic identity.

He tips us off to his painstaking, systematizing mind in the book's opening, where he scrupulously distinguishes and marshals arguments in defending and explaining the need for a book of this sort (a "social ontology" rather than more traditional sociology), his writing it in English (rather than Spanish), the propriety of authorship by a Cuban-born American (rather than someone residing in a Spanish-speaking country), the work's timeliness, and so on. When even the boilerplate questions of the preface (why this book? why this author? why now?) win such painstaking seriousness, we know we are in for something special. Gracia is thorough and always fair-minded in his examination of what group(s) should be bunched, why,

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and under what labels, and his Thomistic style of responding separately to each of many objections to his own views brings a new level of rigor, sophistication, intelligence, and intellectual creativity to a field mired in the confusions of second-rate social scientists and the ideological posturing of muddled activists.

That is not to say that Gracia's position is necessarily convincing or that his argumentation—while careful, historically informed, and methodical—is always cogent. Gracia argues that there is a Hispanic ethnicity in addition to the Mexican, Mexican-American, Spanish, Puerto Rican, etc. particular ethnicities. (Perhaps it is a trans-ethnic category.) Moreover, he thinks there is Hispanic *identity*, involving some level of unity, though not homogeneity. He defines "Hispanic identity" in the following fashion:

> Hispanics are the group of people comprised by the inhabitants of the countries of the Iberian peninsula after 1492 and what were to become the colonies of those countries after the encounter between Iberia and America took place, and by descendants of these people who live in other countries . . . but preserve some link to [them].

Gracia advances this complex, disjunctive account in service of his claim, often repeated here, that there need be no quality or property that all Hispanics share. Many different things can count as being Hispanic.

In contrast to essentialist and other conceptions of ethnicity, Gracia calls his a "Familial-Historical View," invoking Wittgenstein's famous discussion in *Philosophical Investigations* of "family resemblance." Wittgenstein's idea was that there need be no facial feature that, say, all the Kennedys share, though we can say that John and John Jr. had a distinctive mouth, and John and Bobby very similar eyes, so that John Jr. and Bobby were linked through each's similarity to John, even if neither looked much like the other. In the same way, Gracia thinks, not all Hispanics share one common feature, but they are linked by a web of smaller-scale connections, especially historical ones. This is plausible, and promising in its rejection of any transhistorical Hispanic "essence," but it gets Gracia into difficulties.

First, Gracia here flirts with the fashionable idea that ethnicity is a "social construct," insisting that fami-

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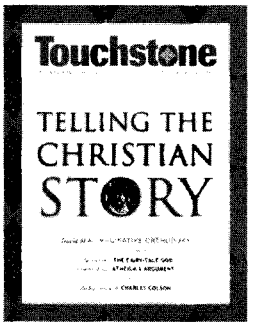

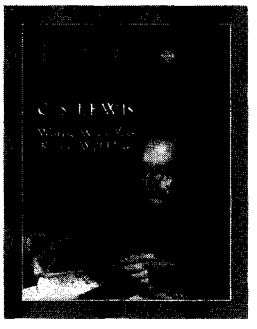

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lies are conventional and legal realities where Wittgenstein thought his ideas applied chiefly to biological families. But Wittgenstein was right—family resemblance makes sense only in biological terms, not constructed ones. When Carolyn Bessette joined the Kennedys through her marriage to John Jr., she could have no real *family* resemblance to them, however similar she looked to some of them. The resemblance could only have been chance. In contrast, had one of John Sr.'s assignations yielded an illegitimate son who was never acknowledged and never bore the name of Kennedy, the child could well have shared the Kennedy family resemblance, inheriting, say, his father's smile. Gracia's rejection of Wittgenstein's emphasis on biology undermines his appeal to family resemblance theory as a model for understanding Hispanic identity. It removes a necessary element.

More importantly, family resemblance would preclude any real unity among Hispanics, since part of Wittgenstein's point seems to have been to explain how family members, such as the Kennedys, could be connected indirectly without each sharing some trait with everyone else. It is difficult to see how there could be what Gracia wants: a Hispanic identity that all Hispanics can share without having any common property. If the only thing all Hispanics have in common is a legal status and the term "Hispanic," then there is no real, substantive, extra-conventional unity or identity to Hispanics.

On the other hand, if Gracia is correct that all Hispanics share an identity and constitute a unity, then this itself is something they would all have in common, contrary to Gracia's denials. I think much of the difficulty here stems from Gracia's failure to distinguish the commonplace and unexceptionable notion of ethnic affiliation from the much fishier idea of ethnic identity. Gracia's mastery of metaphysics should have enabled him to see that ethnicity has nothing to do with the sameness (*idem*) that makes talk of identity meaningful.

AFTER ITS FIRST few chapters—on why Latinos need any name, on why "Hispanic" is the best one available, on the nature of ethnicity, on the meaning and ontology of identity—the book's interest to general readers fades considerably. Gracia's discussion of *mestizos* and the wider phenomenon of ethnic "mixing" is illuminating, but a later chapter on Hispanic philosophy, and a still later one on Latin American philosophy, do not make good on Gracia's promise that they will illustrate and provide insight into the wider situation of Hispanics.

The last chapter, on philosophy in the United States and the place of both Hispanic philosophers and Hispanic philosophy within it, contains much that is amusing, but is decidedly "in-house." Perhaps Gracia is correct that Spanish and Latin American philosophy are neglected in the U.S. because they are seen as "foreign" in ways that French and German philosophy are not. Yet Gracia himself suggests alternative explanations, among them, that narrowly Catholic and scholastic concerns preoccupied Spanish thought well after northern Europe's secularization, that Iberian philosophy had a different focus than that elsewhere, or that the decline in Spain's influence in intellectual matters followed from its political and military decline.

Though Gracia's philosophical care usually serves him well, sometimes it gets out of hand. His tendency to make distinctions and find some truth on all sides makes his discussion of whether there is such a thing as Hispanic philosophy, for example, maddeningly inconclusive. On the other hand, he slips once or twice and makes fashionable claims that aren't careful enough. He main-

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tains, for example, that "evangelization presupposes inequality between those who give and those who receive, those who 'have the truth' and those who are 'deprived of the truth.'" This is facile. Evangelization assumes only the inequality inherent in any effort to teach: that one has some valuable knowledge another lacks. Those who have brought their faith to others at great cost and risk to themselves acted with virtue, not vice, regardless of whether we accept their creed. Similarly, Gracia allows himself to pontificate that only those Hispanic intellectuals who study Hispanic cultures are being "true to [them]selves." This merely presupposes, without any adequate support, that someone's ethnicity contains some deep truth about his self.

ETHNICITY MATTERS to us, in a way and to an extent it shouldn't. My children's African ancestry is evident on their skin; their Hispanic ancestry in their names. Nothing would please their public school teachers more than for my wife and me to send them to school on "diversity" days with some forebear's tales of exotic folkways, wearing dashikis, carrying bowls of rice and beans. We don't oblige. In contrast, their affirmation of serious divergence from the intellectual milieu—defending the Bible's accuracy or Christ's historicity against a teacher's debunking, upholding the good name of Christianity or its history against a schoolbook's ignorant detraction, condemning homosexual acts as perverse and immoral, even just asking that the existence of moral or medical or social reservations about such sex be acknowledged alongside the celebration of all things "gay"—any of this is embarrassing, awkward, and problematic, deemed out of place in the schoolroom.

Herein lies a lesson. What is deepest and most valuable in culture (even if it is also erroneous), what is normally *worth* maintaining and most honorable within culture, is what also transcends it. If we are to take seriously diversity and the multicultural, then we must get beyond the trivializing shopping-mall "international food court" model, wherein "The Wok Stop" harmoniously nestles down between a (faux) Jewish deli and a croissant shop, across from Samurai Sushi. The differences that matter are the challenging differences, the ones about the things that matter most.

This spring I heard a lecturer from Princeton blithely argue that school vouchers ought to have strings attached requiring all eligible schools to eliminate religious preferences in admitting students and make worship services optional—all in the name of affirming common values and building a common culture. Today "assimilation" is a bugaboo, while we celebrate a diversity that glorifies variety in cuisine but is somehow consistent with programs of secular homogenization.

To negotiate this Looking Glass world, we'll need a better understanding of ethnicity, with its quite limited importance, and of ethnic culture, whose culture-transcending elements and core are more important than anything else. Right now, our society has these matters upside down. Books like Gracia's may be an invaluable aid in the necessary project of clarifying our thinking, and ultimately overturning it.

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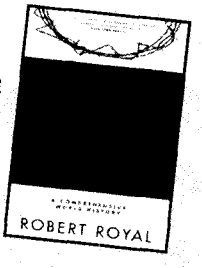

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THE RAV: THE WORLD OF RABBI JOSEPH B. SOLOVEITCHIK. By AARON RAKEFFET-ROTHKOFF. *Ktav. Vol. 1: 296 pp. Vol. 2: 300 pp. $35 per volume.*

***Reviewed by* Shalom Carmy**

FOR MOST OF HIS fifty years as Orthodoxy's premier thinker, Rabbi Joseph Soloveitchik was known simply as "the Rav." Born in 1903 in Russia, trained by his father in the Brisk (Brest-Litovsk) school of Talmud study (which his grandfather invented), he took the then unusual step of studying philosophy at the University of Berlin. He later moved to the United States, where as an indefatigable lecturer in Boston and New York he

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made his primary mark as a Talmud teacher of legendary creativity and expository powers. Equally sovereign at public lectures and in the pressure cooker of his advanced classroom, he taught and captivated thousands, including many a traditionalist who fidgeted uncomfortably at the occasional allusion to Plato, Kierkegaard, or Rudolf Otto. The Rav was especially noted for applying to "theological" topics, like repentance and prayer, the rigorous analysis usually associated with more conventionally juridic areas like Jewish tort law.

Even before his death in 1993, Soloveitchik's legacy had become a subject of controversy. One would have expected some of this to happen because of his unique stature, but he exacerbated the situation because he rarely published authoritative rulings on disputed questions. One school of would-be heirs claims that he is a traditional Eastern European rabbi, indifferent to the world outside the proverbial "four cubits" of the Talmudic study hall. They deny or downplay the significance of his ventures beyond the world into which he was born. Another group interprets his intellectual openness as a covert approval of theological liberalism or halakhic leniency. Both sides lament the lack of a more explicit record, even as they seem oddly reluctant to grapple with the available texts.

Aaron Rakeffet-Rothkoff, in his two-volume biography, tries to stay above the battle, and for the most part he succeeds in doing so. He avoids the fray by relying heavily on excerpts from Soloveitchik's published writings, transcriptions of tapes, and, to a limited degree, second-hand reports. This reliance on primary sources allows him also to avoid the dangers of trivialization, gossip, and sentimental hagiography that so often beset the disciple's depiction of an admired master. Of course, this strategy runs into problems of its own: to select is to exclude, and to choose passages artlessly is to conceal conscious or unconscious principles of exclusion. Excerpting material often suppresses the larger context of a discussion.

Rakeffet-Rothkoff offers detailed documentation of Rabbi Soloveitchik's university studies, and insists that his interest in philosophy remained significant throughout his career. He explicitly counters those who would dismiss this aspect of his personality as inconsequential or merely instrumental. Despite this admirable position, he is not able to communicate effectively much of an idea of what the Rav did with the neo-Kantians and existentialists, nor, for that matter, really explain the exact nature of Brisk analysis to any reader not trained in the method. Nonetheless, much of the Rav's intellectual life does shine through.

RABBI SOLOVEITCHIK'S theological outlook is distinguished by a consistent focus on halakah, i.e., the fulfillment and study of the divine law. His major non-Talmudic publications, which altered the landscape of Jewish theology, almost all stress the normative and intellectual centrality of the halakhic corpus. *Halakhic Man*, his earliest book, argues that typical Jewish piety does not fit familiar models of Western religiosity. The essay presents a phenomenology of this unconventional religious type. In the Rav's telling, halakhic man, as a result of his study of Torah and his observance of the commandments, develops a set of coherent attitudes towards, inter alia, intellectual activity, asceticism, death, otherworldliness, esotericism, mysticism, creativity, repentance, and providence.

Halakhic man displays more than a passing resemblance to the

SHALOM CARMY *teaches Philosophy and Jewish Studies at Yeshiva University and is editor of* Tradition: A Journal of Orthodox Thought, *published by the Rabbinical Council of America.*

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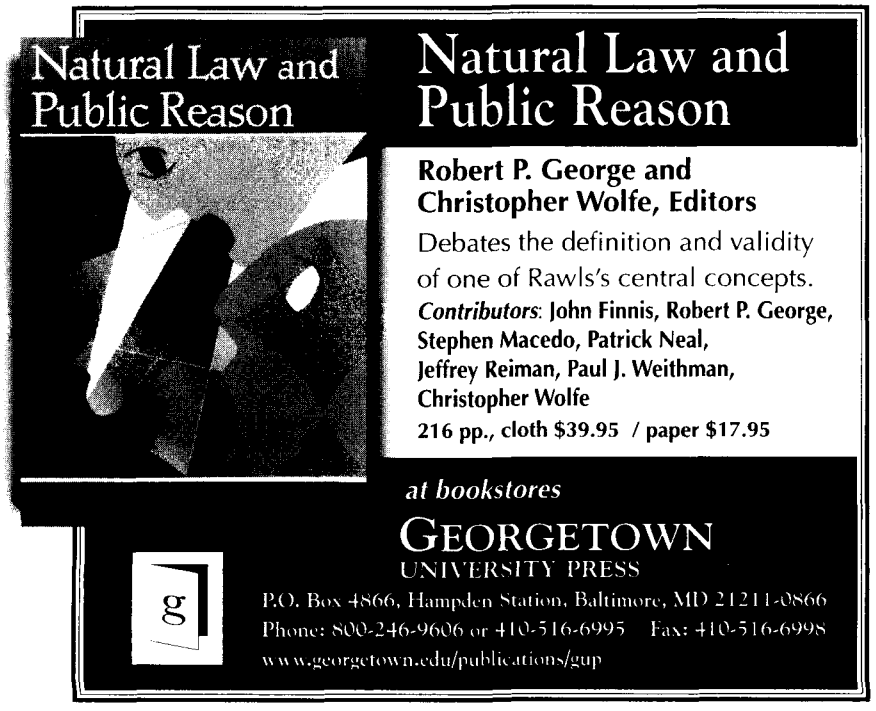
Soloveitchik family with its Lithuanian Talmudic legacy. This model seems more intellectual, personally more reticent, and spiritually more austere than the emotionally exuberant Hasidic masters featured by Martin Buber, Abraham Joshua Heschel, and their successors. Halakhic man appears less exotic to the secular academic mind, but for that very reason more exasperating. It is the Rav's achievement that he compels the outsider to confront a puzzling world, even as he offers the initiated a new self-awareness.

Among Rabbi Soloveitchik's longer essays, *The Lonely Man of Faith* is the best known, and most accessible, to the non-Jewish reader. Indeed, the Rav presented an early version of it to a Christian audience. The point of departure in this work is the religious individual's sense of estrangement from Western culture. Contrasting "majestic man," the Adam of Genesis 1, with the "man of faith" depicted in Genesis 2, the Rav insists that both are fulfilling the will of the Creator. Adam 1, created in the image of God, does so by conquering the universe, imposing his knowledge, technology, and cultural institutions upon the world: religion affirms this apparently "secular" mandate. Yet the enlargement of human majesty and dignity is insufficient: the heavens may tell the glory of God, but it is an impersonal glory.

Personal relationship is born when Adam 2 responds to the divine command: he does not subdue the garden, but rather tills it and preserves it. If the human community depicted in Genesis 1 is a utilitarian one, where man and woman join together, like the male and female of other animals, to further the ends of their species, the community of Genesis 2 emerges from a crisis of existential loneliness. This covenantal community can be sealed only by the participation of the Divine. In *Lonely Man* and similar essays the singularity of the religious encounter, be it the individual's or the Jewish people's, is often linked with an essential incommunicable loneliness.

U-Vikkashtem mi-Sham ("And Ye Shall Seek"), the untranslated sequel to *Halakhic Man*, is the Rav's most ambitious treatise. Here he seeks to map the vicissitudes of the human relationship with God. The primary stage posits two religious situations: the human search for God, or "natural consciousness," which experiences the divine as a response to our cultural values and needs; and the "revelational consciousness," in which God initiates the encounter, irrupting into the human world over the infinite abyss as a commanding presence. Natural consciousness aims at satisfaction; revelational consciousness demands obedience. We are bearers of both types of consciousness, which interact to engender several distinct manifestations of the love and fear of God. The dialectic eventually leads beyond both the alienation of mere obedience and the immanence of the natural quest to the commandment of *imitatio Dei*: man is required not only to obey God but to follow Him. The highest stage is one in which the individual and the community engage in the commandment of *devekut*, cleaving unto God, which is defined (in decidedly nonmystical terms) as an act of identification or partnership with Him.

Drafted in 1944, *The Halakhic Mind* (originally given the Kantian title "Is the Philosophy of Halakha Possible?") is an attempt to determine the epistemological autonomy of religious knowledge in the light of contemporary philosophy and science. The world is much richer than any one system of concepts can hold, Soloveitchik argued, an observation that provided the basis for respecting a plurality of religious thought systems. The principle of complementarity in quantum physics further prompted Soloveitchik to consider such pluralism seriously. The result was a phenomenology of the religious experience that began with the objective data of religion (in the Rav's case halakah), which the believer must appropriate for himself.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Once he interiorizes the objective religious rituals and practices and submits to them, he can carry out his religious practices in an integrated fashion, subjectively as well as objectively oriented to God.

FOR THOSE WHO remember Rabbi Soloveitchik, and, I hope, for the many who did not have the privilege of hearing him, the verbatim excerpts in this book bring his voice alive. Rakeffet-Rothkoff's selections include many deep Jewish and human insights, personal glimpses, and Soloveitchik family lore. Rakeffet-Rothkoff makes available for the first time some rather interesting remarks by the Rav on the psychology of mourning, the sociology of American prayer, and on a halakhic ruling from the early 1950s that one has a duty not to inform on an ex-Communist colleague unless the subject of investigation presents a genuine present threat.

Yet these volumes are neither a full biography nor an introductory anthology. In some respects, this text is very much a fan's album. One does not learn, in any systematic fashion, what distinctive doctrine Rabbi Soloveitchik formulated, or why the content and manner of his teaching continue to arouse controversy. We get not so much the public account of a very private man as an account of how that man was perceived by the rank-and-file membership of the Rabbinical Council of America, to which Rabbi Soloveitchik devoted so much of his time and energy. This orientation explains the emphasis on the Rav as a storyteller, as well as the large number of photographs.

Anyone interested in the twentieth-century story of traditional Judaism and its arrival in the United States or who desires to know more about non-Hasidic Jewish religiosity will enjoy and appreciate these books. In fact, Rakeffet-Rothkoff's stories may satisfy such a reader better than the original source, for in his writings Rabbi Soloveitchik invariably employs the telling anecdote in the service of a larger thesis. Whoever wishes to wrestle with the Rav as a major theologian, or for that matter as a master Talmudist, will only have his appetite whetted. For such a reader there is no alternative to picking up Rabbi Soloveitchik's books and experiencing his mind and spirit first-hand.

The Making of a Saint

TERESA OF ÁVILA: THE PROGRESS OF A SOUL. By CATHLEEN MEDWICK. *Knopf. 282 pp. $26.*

***Reviewed by* Charlotte Allen**

MOST PEOPLE KNOW St. Teresa of Ávila (1515-1582), the Spanish mystic, prolific spiritual writer, and indomitable Carmelite reformer, largely through the High Mannerist statue that Gian Lorenzo Bernini carved of her in Rome about seventy years after her death: a marble-pale woman of astonishing classical beauty, swathed in swirling nun's robes except for a lovely bare foot, and bent back half-fainting in an ecstasy that is undoubtedly religious—for an angel is piercing her breast with a spear—but also has clear and disturbing sexual overtones.

This is the stereotype Teresa: a Bernini blend of the erotic and (if the viewer is a Protestant and/or religious skeptic) the neurotic. In his *Mysticism and Catholicism* (1925), the stoutly rationalistic Englishman Hugh E. M. Stutfield dismissed Teresa's style of sanctity as "a dreary round of billing and cooing," and her style of writing as "cheap, trite, sub-

CHARLOTTE ALLEN *produces the Catholic page for* Beliefnet.com. *She is the author of* The Human Christ: The Search for the Historical Jesus *(Free Press).*

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urban" (as if there were suburbs in sixteenth-century Castile). Sigmund Freud's colleague Josef Breuer called her "the patron saint of hysteria," and Sigmund Freud's deconstructionist epigone Jacques Lacan had even unkinder (and infinitely more vulgar) words to describe her: "You only have to go and look at Bernini's statue of her in Rome to understand immediately that she's coming."

Teresa also has her share of admirers, many of them women of considerable intellect—as she was—who have to their credit refused to view her religious experiences in such condescendingly pathological terms. They have included George Eliot, who cast Teresa as patron saint of the frustrated bluestocking Dorothea Brooke in *Middlemarch*; Vita Sackville-West, who made Teresa into a twentieth-century free spirit with (but of course) lesbian proclivities; and a range of feminist theorists, from Simone de Beauvoir in *The Second Sex* to the tenured denizens of numerous women's studies departments. To them, Teresa was a postmodern "subversive" against patriarchal power structures both secular and ecclesial, androcentric metanarrative, and whatever else is currently deemed oppressive to the female sex. (See my review of one of the better products of this fashionable scholarly industry, theologian Gillian T. W. Ahlgren's *Teresa of Ávila and the Politics of Sanctity*, in the December 1999 issue of FIRST THINGS.)

FORTUNATELY, Cathleen Medwick's *Teresa of Ávila: The Progress of a Soul* falls into none of the above traps, neither denigrating Teresa as an eros-sublimating hysteric as her many pompous male critics have done, nor canonizing her as a plaster saint of feminism as her many star-struck female admirers have done. This is a gem of a book, and in it the author aims to do something quite different: to acquaint the reader thoroughly with Teresa in all her intelligence, her strength of will, her tenacity, her courage, and her complexity. (Teresa was a saint but not an angel, to paraphrase Phyllis McGinley, and she actually did have quite a sex drive, falling continually in and out of love with men, including at least one of her confessors.)

The author also simply wants to tell Teresa's story. That story is the story of Teresa's achievement of holiness during a tumultuous life, a subject that Medwick takes quite seriously and at face value. There is no rationalizing away the supernatural in this book. When the angel pierces Teresa's body in the mystical vision that Bernini's *Ecstasy of Saint Teresa* captures, when Christ appears to Teresa personally and directs her every action, when she levitates (rather often) several feet off the ground during prayer, when her corpse refuses to decompose after her death and in fact smells sweetly of roses months later—Medwick's narrative is as matter-of-fact as the practical-minded Teresa's and her contemporaries' own telling of these events.

Furthermore, Medwick turns out to be Teresa's ideal biographer—paradoxically. She is not a professional scholar but a former features editor for *Vogue*, *Vanity Fair*, *Mirabella*, and *House and Garden* (although she also has two master's degrees, in English and comparative Renaissance literature, from Columbia University, and the book includes a knowledgeable but not overbearing scholarly apparatus). She is not a Catholic, but rather Jewish in "background," as she describes herself.

The book, although less than three hundred pages long including endnotes and index, took Medwick fifteen full years to write, and she credits her patient agent, editor, family, and certain mentors, some of whom are now dead, with enabling her to see it through. She has illustrated the book with about a dozen classic images of Teresa, including a portrait painted by a Spanish friar, Juan de la Miseria, when Teresa was sixty-one. (The portrait shows a jowly, beetle-browed, distinctly non-Berniniesque nun, and Teresa was reported to have complained, "God forgive you, Fray Juan, you've made me a bleary-eyed old hag.") As an

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extra treat, Medwick also includes in an appendix the text of the "The Flaming Hart," the Catholic metaphysical poet Richard Crashaw's gorgeous 1640s tribute to Teresa's dauntless, passionate spirit: "By all the eagle in thee, all the dove; / By all thy lives & deaths of love. . . ."

WRITING FOR *Vogue*, *Vanity Fair*, and other delicious chronicles of the passing material and social scene obviously helped Medwick recreate in dense and telling detail the scene in which Teresa operated. This saint, although supposedly cloistered in a number of convents, was in fact never disconnected from a thick network of family, friends, court dignitaries (including the reigning King Philip II of Spain, with whom she corresponded), and an array of church officials, some of whom befriended her and others either suspected her of heresy (personal revelations from God were under the Church's suspicion during this era of the dawn of the Reformation) or found her constant gadding about to found new Carmelite institutions unseemly in a woman.

Teresa was a mystic, but she was also a woman of the world who functioned as executrix of one of her brother's wills and ladled out household counsel to her married sister Juana. Medwick regales her book's readers with descriptions of lacy sixteenth-century Spanish clothing, courtyard house design, massive oak furniture, painted devotional objects, Flemish carpets, wrought-iron chandeliers, and even the silk cushions, holdovers from Moorish days, on which the nuns reclined to converse and do their embroidery.

Teresa was born in Ávila only twenty-three years after Columbus' sail to Hispaniola under the Spanish flag, and her life was in many ways intertwined with the early history of the Hispanic New World. At least two of her brothers served as *conquistadores* in Peru, conquered by Francisco Pizzaro in 1533. Gold from Peru and elsewhere in the New World flooded into Spain during Teresa's early years. It was the Internet wealth of the sixteenth century, creating huge new fortunes and a thriving commercial society even in austere fortress towns such as Ávila, high in the barren Castilian mountains of central Spain where it was wintry most of the year and agricultural productivity was chronically low.

The chief ambition of the arriviste Spanish merchants was to turn themselves, and even more so their offspring, into *hidalgos*—gentlemen—through well-placed marriages and official certificates of nobility. Teresa's paternal grandfather, Juan Sánchez, followed exactly this pattern, but with a twist: he was a *converso*, a Jew who had converted to Christianity in 1492 as an alternative to expulsion from Spain under Ferdinand and Isabella. Sánchez, who was already under a cloud with the Inquisition, which suspected most *conversos* of secretly practicing Judaism, took the extra step of adopting his Christian wife's brother's surname, Cepeda.

Their son Alonso de Cepeda climbed further up the ladder of *hidalguia*, marrying two well-born Ávilan Christian women in succession, the second of whom, Beatriz de Ahumada (Teresa's mother and already pregnant at age fourteen with one of Teresa's brothers when she made her marriage vow) could trace her lineage back to the knights who had reconquered Castile from the Moors during the eleventh century. A few years later, Teresa de Cepeda y Ahumada, the third of Beatriz's ten children, came into the world in a now utterly respectable noble household with a crest over its arched doorway depicting a tower that the Ahumada men had defended in the *reconquista*.

TERESA'S LIFE can be divided into three parts. In the first part, lasting

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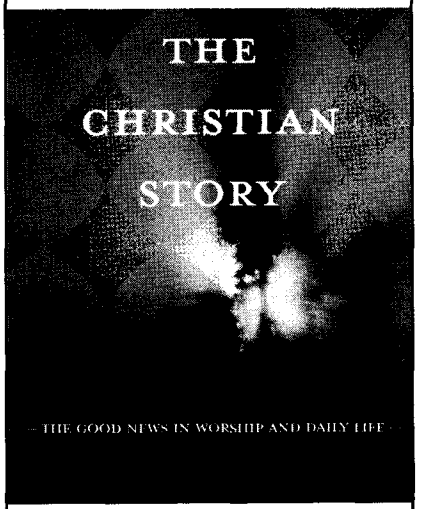

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until age twenty, she was a vain, vivacious, exquisitely stylish young lady. She liked to flirt and court so thoroughly that she nearly lost her virginity at age sixteen to a handsome cousin (her father packed her off to an Augustinian convent/finishing school in the nick of time). She was also morally and religiously serious, steeping herself in the ideals depicted in the medieval romances and the lives of the saints. She was high-strung, and as she grew out of her teens she began suffering from a crippling series of illnesses, mostly psychosomatic, that left her occasionally paralyzed and always in pain.

She decided she had a vocation to be a nun—or at least that she did not want to marry and be confined at home like her mother—and in 1535 she sneaked off, against her father's wishes, to the Carmelite convent of the Encarnación just outside Ávila's walls. For nearly twenty years she lived the second part of her life as an exemplary but not particularly devoted Carmelite sister. At the Encarnación, a "relaxed" convent rule prevailed, subsidized by generous endowments from the nuns' wealthy relatives. The sisters wore elegant black serge habits, lived comfortably in large dormitory rooms, received visitors constantly, and presided over *galanteos de monjas*—chaste or presumably chaste flirtations with male admirers. The gregarious Teresa specialized in such *galanteos* from behind the grille in the convent parlor, and there was also a constant stream of Cepeda and Ahumada family members to the convent. Although she took the religious name Teresa de Jesús, the aristocratic convent allowed her to retain her noble title Doña Teresa de Ahumada.

In 1554, when she was nearly forty, Teresa, who had hitherto found it hard to pray, had a profound religious experience before an image of the wounded Christ in the convent oratory. She felt "that he was within me, or that I was totally engulfed by him." The third part of her life, the "real" part to which she devoted most of her *Vida*, or autobiography (its first version completed in 1562), had begun.

She began having intense mystical experiences in which Christ appeared to her constantly and feelings of divine love engulfed her. During one of these raptures she saw the angel with golden spear in hand whose piercing Bernini dramatized. But it was a difficult period for her. Most of the other nuns at the Encarnación did not understand; the Inquisition lurked outside with its suspicions of anyone who claimed to be an *alumbrada*, a recipient of special divine illumination; poor health plagued her constantly; and a succession of priest-confessors to whom she related the contents of her visions passed her nervously from hand to hand.

In 1562, inspired by a Franciscan friar, Pedro de Alcántara (later to be canonized himself), who was attempting to restore his order to its original barefoot poverty, Teresa took it upon herself to reform the Carmelites along similar lines. Behind the back of the order's male superior in Ávila, Ángel de Salazar, Teresa begged and found the money to set up a tiny, destitute convent of four humbly living and scrupulously devout barefoot (or "Discalced") Carmelite sisters in a donated tumbledown dwelling in Ávila. It was a stealth operation, and when Salazar returned and found out about it, he ordered Teresa to leave town.

That became the template for Teresa's existence until her death: sneaking into a city with a cartload of Discalced nuns clad in rope sandals (Teresa eventually capitulated on the question of bare feet in freezing Castile) and the coarse brown robes and white capes of the original Carmelites, decamping in dead of night and setting up a chapel in a decomposing building that some rich resident was only too glad to give away, pleading, scheming, and corresponding (more than three hundred of her letters survive) to obtain some ecclesiastical blessing or other on the endeavor, then moving on to another city. Over her life, she

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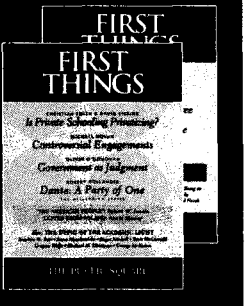

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founded seventeen Discalced convents throughout Spain. Her friend, the short-of-stature Carmelite mystic John of the Cross (she jokingly referred to him as "half" a friar), duplicated her work among men of the order.

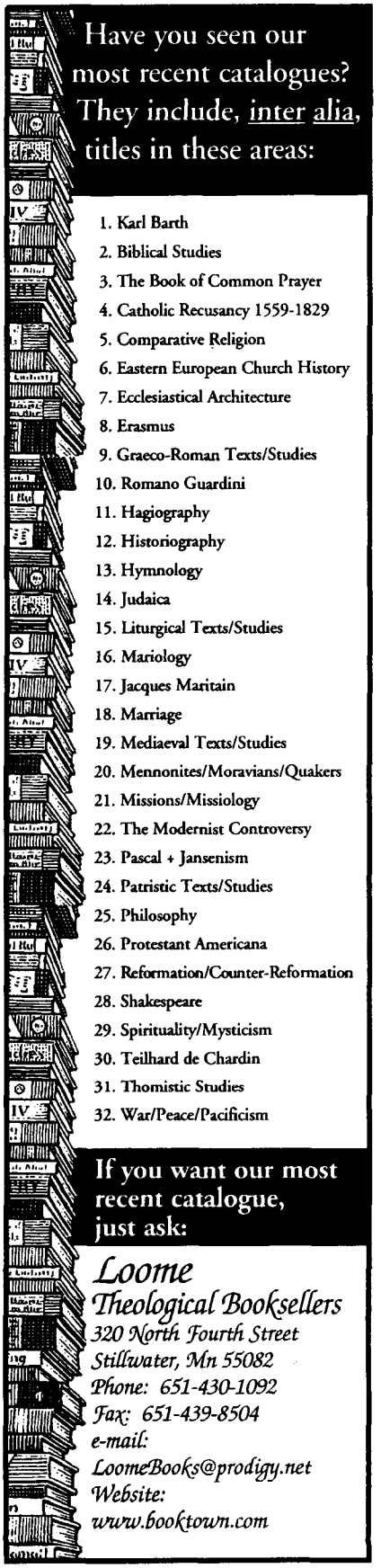
THROUGH GRIT, intelligence, and what she called her *determinada determinación*, her sheer force of will, Teresa usually managed to prevail. Thanks to the efforts of the charismatic Pedro de Alcántara, her Discalced foundation in Ávila, San José, won official approval—if not from Salazar, then from Rome. She proved to be a brilliant convent administrator with a knack for selecting able prioresses for her new foundations, and she enjoyed spinning thread and cooking simple treats for the nuns. She spent five happy years at San José, setting a quiet example for the strictly enclosed nuns and regularly levitating over the cooking pots and in the garden. She rewrote her *Vida* and composed several other classics of spirituality that have placed her among the greatest prose stylists of Renaissance Spain: *The Way of Perfection*, aimed at giving spiritual instruction to her nuns, and *Moradas*, usually translated as *The Interior Castle*, which recalls the mystical writings of Hildegard of Bingen.

Teresa's judgment was not always the best. Toward the end of her life she developed an obsessive idolization of one of her confessors, Gracián de la Madre de Diós, a man half her age, whom she regarded as a figure from the Song of Solomon and who pushed her to take her Discalced reforming efforts south into Seville, a sultry, decadent Andalusian city awash in Peruvian gold and those who wanted to lay their hands on it, and where the local candidates for her Discalced convent showed up in fancy dresses and heavy eye makeup.

The "Calced" Carmelites—those who did not buy into Teresa's reforms and fancied that the Discalced looked down on them—were already her mortal enemies. They and some disgruntled Discalced nuns reported to the Inquisition in 1576 that she and Gracián were lovers who led the nuns in orgiastic rituals. The inquisitors ruled that the charges were absurd (Teresa was sixty-one by then and her nuns were indisputably pious), but another Calced conspiracy resulted in Teresa's being excommunicated and ordered to get out of Andalusia and spend the rest of her days behind the walls of a convent in Castile. The Calced at one point took John of the Cross prisoner; he was lashed, starved, and confined to a cell for nine months.

The story ultimately had a happy ending. The excommunication against Teresa and her nuns was lifted, and John of the Cross escaped from the Calced jail. By 1579, Teresa was on the road again, where she kept a grueling schedule of overseeing convents until she died, on October 4, 1582, of metastasized uterine cancer. Witnesses said she died in a state of ecstasy, "her soul ripped away from her body by the force of God's will," as Medwick writes. Her wrinkled face became smooth and radiant, they reported, and a fragrance wafted from everything she had touched before her death.

Medwick's book is full of wonderful things, but it is not perfect. Although she delineates Teresa herself vividly, Medwick treats the book's numerous supporting characters rather perfunctorily, and their stories are often incomplete and chronologically disconnected, as though Medwick had planned to say more about them but changed her mind in order to keep the book short. You will have to turn elsewhere to find out very much that is useful about Philip II or the wicked, one-eyed Ana de Mendoza, princess of Eboli, one of Teresa's most fascinating arch-enemies. Readers who know little about sixteenth-century Spain may find themselves hopelessly con-



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fused from time to time (a chronology table for Teresa and a map of her travels might have helped). I loved this book, but I wish its author had given it a final read before she sent it off to that long-suffering editor of hers.

BRIEFLY NOTED

JOURNAL OF A SOUL: THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF POPE JOHN XXIII. Translated by DOROTHY WHITE. *Image/Doubleday. 453 pp. $14.95.*

A new edition of John XXIII's journals (originally printed in Italy in 1964 and in the United States in 1980) arrives just in time to help mediate the latest round in the perpetual struggle between competing views of his papacy, and of the great Council that he summoned. Mislabeled an "autobiography"—it is rather a compilation of journals kept by the Holy Father in the seminary and during retreats in the decades that followed his ordination—this volume is what the modern Christian might call a prayer journal. Indeed, the final pages include a wide variety of prayers written by John for particular intentions and devotions. In the seminary, young Angelo Roncalli made notations weekly, sometimes daily, while later his entries came only during annual retreats. The book is thus weighted toward the years long before he became Pope (or even bishop). Further, it contains nothing about his governance of the Church, or about his work before or during the Council for which he will always be remembered. And much of what was written takes the form of self-rebuke, often repeated almost verbatim. Year after year, he is inattentive at prayer. His mind wanders during the rosary. He talks too much. Lacks humility. Today's reader must fight the urge to skim, rather than read, the many pages on which these reflections recur. Yet there are rewards for those who keep watch with him through these many nights. Perhaps in his dogged struggle to pray well, John will someday be the patron of those who try, fail, and try again. John XXIII never had a parish. He was a bishop's secretary, a seminary professor, and then spent most of his life as a Vatican emissary to faraway places. He spent a decade in Bulgaria, where he says (with admirable care and charity) that *nothing* ever happened during ten long and boring years. Then it was off to Turkey, Greece, and France. He was a kindly presence in those venues, but there is no sense that he "accomplished" anything at all. John was named a bishop in early life (to give him the necessary diplomatic rank), but didn't get a diocese until he was in his seventies. In his book *Saints and Sinners: A History of the Popes,* Eamon Duffy calls Roncalli "a genial Vatican diplomat who had been made Patriarch [of Venice] as a retirement job." John was evidently a strong backer of schools and of charity to the poor, but he never writes anything to suggest any grand design or plan for his administration of Venice. Then he was a Pope who carefully explained that the first order of business was to write his will, because "it is quite wrong for any ecclesiastic to die without leaving his will in good order" and "the Pope's example [should] be an encouragement and an admonition to all the cardinals." Speaking again of John, Duffy says that "his own theology and piety were utterly traditional." Nothing in this 450-page work suggests other than that God chose this humble man to live out eighty-some years of prayerful obedience (1881-1963), much of it in the silent, dusty corners of the church bureaucracy, so that he would be in the right place and the right frame of mind to say, on a quiet afternoon walk one day early in his papacy, the few sentences that the

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Holy Spirit needed to have spoken. On that day John XXIII turned to his secretary of state and "was the first to be surprised" to hear himself speak of an ecumenical council, these words "being quite contrary to any previous supposition or idea of my own on this subject." John and his Council are, and will remain, the object of argument between rival groups seeking approval for their view of his legacy and the Council's work. The modernists who are quick to invoke the name of John and the "spirit of the Council" do so only by ignoring the life's work of this man. Prayer. Obedience. Peaceful submission to the will of God, even if it took the form of foreign assignments that appeared to serve no purpose. For many who call themselves Christian, nothing can be the will of God if it does not make sense to them. For John XXIII, nothing but the will of God ever made sense.

— *Mike Murray*

THE COMING ANARCHY. By ROBERT D. KAPLAN. *Random House. 197 pp. $21.95.*

Call it bracing or call it alarmist, Robert Kaplan has written a contrarian tract that is a necessary antidote to several brands of optimistic moonshine about the post-Cold War world. He calls himself a "realist" in the tradition of Hobbes, Gibbon, Metternich, Kissinger—and Reinhold Niebuhr. (He appears not to be familiar with Herbert Butterfield's jibe that realism is not a philosophy but a boast.) An inveterate traveler to the world's less salubrious places (his *Balkan Ghosts* was chillingly prescient), Kaplan has had it up to here with "moralists," "idealists," and those who trumpet the global triumph of democratic capitalism. Capitalism is not working for the vast majority of the world's people, he contends, and democracy requires social circumstances—mainly a stable middle class—enjoyed by relatively few. "We are entering a bifurcated world. Part of the globe is inhabited by Hegel's and Fukuyama's Last Man, healthy, well fed, and pampered by technology. The other, larger, part is inhabited by Hobbes' First Man, condemned to a life that is 'poor, nasty, brutish, and short.'" The Last Man may be able to master the threat of the future, but not the First Man. Yet neither is Kaplan sanguine about the privileged; the U.S., for instance, is far from immune to the fragmentation and polarization that are making the nation-state a thing of the past. The UN, the Vietnam War, the strength of Chinese authoritarianism, and Islam as a fighting faith—almost everything is at least touched on here, sometimes with piercing insight and sometimes with swashbuckling, tough guy obiter dicta. There is no shortage of things to argue with. In the earlier essays in the book, Kaplan's treatment of population problems is reminiscent of the hysteria of Paul Ehrlich (*The Population Bomb*) back in the sixties, taking note only of the multiplication of lives of misery while ignoring the challenge and possibilities of including the poor in "the circle of productivity and exchange" (John Paul II). All that being said, *The Coming Anarchy* is an important book and necessary reading for those who would be attentive to unedifying aspects of the world as it is.

CHARTER SCHOOLS IN ACTION. By CHESTER E. FINN, BRUNO V. MANNO, and GREGG VANOUREK. *Princeton University Press. 290 pp. $27.95.*

There are public (i.e., government) schools, private schools (religious and secular), voucher schools, and home schooling. Then there are more than 1,700 charter schools, and the number is rapidly growing. Charter schools are "public" in that they receive government funding

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(although at a lower rate per student than the regular public schools) and are chartered by the state, but they are typically controlled by parents and teachers who want something different from what is offered in the public school system. The system, especially the teachers unions, usually fights charter schools, but in some states they are now recognized as a source of competition necessary to improving the system. Chester Finn and his colleagues are excellent guides through the maze of complexities surrounding educational reform today. Of particular interest is the examination of the possibility that, over time, charter schools could displace existing private schools, thus eliminating the largest sector of truly independent education and making all schools vulnerable to the inconstancy of government edicts. This is an important book.

HOMOSEXUALITY, SCIENCE, AND THE "PLAIN SENSE" OF SCRIPTURE. Edited by DAVID L. BALCH. *Eerdmans. 310 pp. $20 paper.*

Twelve essays by eleven Protestant and one Catholic scholar touch on almost every aspect of the current disputes regarding homosexuality and Christian morality, with the writers advocating quite disparate viewpoints. This is a notably intelligent contribution to a set of questions that will continue to agitate Christian communities for the foreseeable future. Of special interest is the editor's comparison of Christian and Jewish readings of pertinent biblical texts.

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FORGIVENESS: BREAKING THE CHAIN OF HATE. By MICHAEL HENDERSON. *BookPartners. 187 pp. $14.95 paper.*

Taking his cue from Philip Yancey's observation that the only thing harder than forgiveness is the alternative, the author draws on stories from South Africa, Northern Ireland, and other troubled places—including his own life and that of others—to demonstrate the liberating power of "forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us." An altogether engaging and persuasive reflection.

THE BOOK OF MIRACLES: THE MEANING OF THE MIRACLE STORIES IN CHRISTIANITY, JUDAISM, BUDDHISM, HINDUISM, AND ISLAM. By KENNETH WOODWARD. *Simon & Schuster. 419 pp. $28.*

Woodward has long been the religion editor at *Newsweek* and is the author of *Making Saints*, an informative and controversial book on the process of beatification and canonization in the Catholic Church. In the present work, he offers miracle stories from various religious traditions and concludes that the "meaning" of the stories in a culture given to vague "spirituality" rather than normative tradition is that they give us permission to believe in ourselves.

AUTHORITY VESTED: A STORY OF IDENTITY AND CHANGE IN THE LUTHERAN CHURCH—MISSOURI SYNOD. By MARY TODD. *Eerdmans. 336 pp. $20 paper.*

This is in part "a story of identity and change in the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod" and, in larger part, a brief against that church body's refusal to ordain women to the pastoral ministry. The author, who teaches history at Concordia University in Illinois, is clearly an advocate but raises in a fair-minded way questions of ecclesial authority in a body that claims to be ruled only by explicit biblical warrant. Foreword by Martin E. Marty, formerly of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod.

SHARING THE BOOK: RELIGIOUS PERSPECTIVES ON THE RIGHTS AND WRONGS OF PROSELYTISM. Edited by JOHN WITTE and RICHARD C. MARTIN. *Orbis. 423 pp. $25 paper.*

One person's evangelization is another's proselytizing, the assumption being that the first is a good thing and the second very bad. There will probably never be complete agreement on the definition of either, but this book makes a valuable contribution in advancing our thinking about both. Essays by Catholic, Protestant, Jewish, Muslim, and Church of Latter-day Saints contributors, with those by Rabbi David Novak and Jozef Cardinal Tomko, prefect of the Vatican's congregation for evangelization, being of most particular interest.

THE DREAM AND THE NIGHTMARE: THE SIXTIES' LEGACY TO THE UNDERCLASS. By MYRON MAGNET. *Encounter. 269 pp. $15.95 paper.*

Now available in paperback, this withering critique of the responsibility of the liberal Haves for the plight of the Have-nots helps us understand why America has, for the first time, what appears to be a permanent urban underclass. George W. Bush says the book transformed his thinking about what needs to be done to assure "a decent and hopeful tomorrow for every single American." A tract for the times that is even more timely now than when it was first published in 1993.

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THE DIVIDED CHURCH: MOVING LIBERALS AND CONSERVATIVES FROM DIATRIBE TO DIALOGUE. By RICHARD G. HUTCHESON and PEGGY SHRIVER. *InterVarsity. 240 pp. $12.99 paper.*

Members and leaders in the Presbyterian Church (USA), both Hutcheson and Shriver are clearly concerned about the prospect of their denomination being torn apart by impassioned disagreements. It seems unlikely that their somewhat wan hope for reconciliation will convince more belligerent liberals and conservatives, but their intention and intelligence in trying are deserving of honor.

BRIGHT PROMISE, FAILED COMMUNITY: CATHOLICS AND THE AMERICAN PUBLIC ORDER. By JOSEPH VARACALLI. *Lexington. 131 pp. $45.*

Sociologist Varacalli addresses the Neuhaus thesis regarding "the Catholic moment" and concludes that the "promise" has not been realized and will not be realized, at least in the near future, because of the personal, communal, and institutional weaknesses of Catholicism in America. The book is valuable both for its description of those weaknesses and the abundant documentation supplied by the author. Between those who believe that the American liberal order is inherently and fatally flawed and those who believe it can be restored (whom he identifies as the neoconservatives), Varacalli stands with the first party. At the same time, he suggests that pressing the neoconservative agenda—especially with respect to the role of "mediating institutions" in society—may be the best way of determining which view is historically vindicated. The book should be welcomed by all students of the Catholic situation in America.

RICHARD JOHN NEUHAUS, EDITOR

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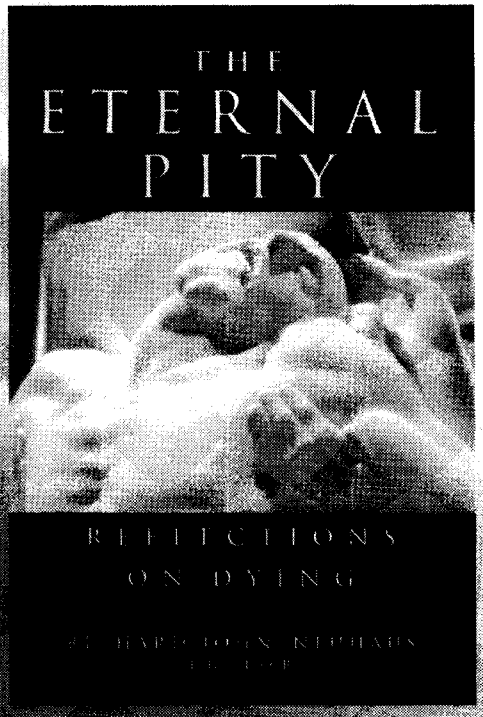

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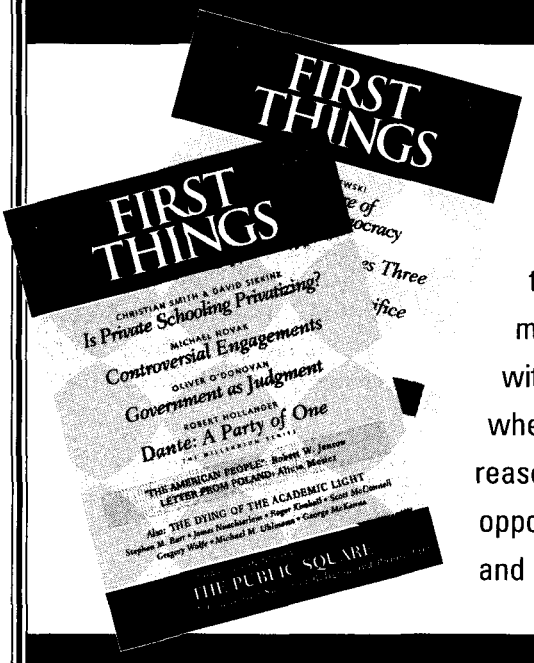

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Richard John Neuhaus

Forgive Us Our Trespasses . . .

Early returns tend to vindicate, at least in part, the worries of cardinals and others when John Paul II announced in the 1994 document *Tertio Millennio Adveniente* (On the Coming of the Third Millennium) that the Catholic Church should publicly confess the sins of her children over the centuries. The fears were several: that confession of errors past would undermine confidence in the authority of the Church; that the distinction would be blurred between the sinfulness of the Church's members and the holiness of the Church as the mystical Body of Christ; that such a confession would reinforce the cultural presumption of the moral superiority of the present; and that the enemies of the Church would construe such a confession as an "apology" confirming their critique of Catholicism. These concerns and responses to them are masterfully treated in Father Avery Dulles' article, "Should the Church Repent?"(December 1998).

One may reasonably assume that the Pope was well aware of the risks involved, and judged them well worth taking. Such a public confession, he believes, is a sign not of the Church's weakness but of her self-confidence in an historical moment in which she is the world's singular institution of moral credibility. Above all, it is a sign of confidence in the forgiving and renewing grace of God in Christ. Four hundred years after the divisions of the sixteenth century, and having survived centuries of hostile challenge by Enlightenment secularism, the Catholic Church is no longer in a defensive mode. All this is part of John Paul II's strategic thinking in laying the groundwork for what he calls a springtime of world evangelization. As the thirty-page explanation produced by the International Theological Commission and presented by Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger insists, the Church has nothing to fear from historical truth, including unpleasant truths about things done in the name of the Church.

When the Mass of Reconciliation with its ceremony of "the purification of memory" was celebrated on the First Sunday of Lent, there was intense public interest. I confess that my heart sank just a little when, in several media appearances and interviews I did, it became evident that the worst misconstruals dominated the discussion. In response to the Pope's confession, one heard multiple variations on the themes: "It's about time!" and "I told you so!" and "It's too little too late!" The heart of the matter seemed to get lost amidst the chortlings and recriminations. The purification of memory focused, in order of priority, on Catholic responsibility for divisions among Christians, on the injustice of employing coercion in the service of truth, on the historically "tormented" relationship between Christians and Jews, and on "responsibility for the evils of today," including secularism, moral relativism, atheism, and the demeaning of human life. Perhaps predictably, most media reports homed in on the Jewish connection and the Holocaust, frequently alluding to the old canards about Pius XII's alleged silence regarding the latter. Jewish voices typically allowed that the confession was a welcome "first step" but did not go far enough. When it comes to admitting the sins of the Catholic Church, a rabbi friend has observed, "We Jews now have two slogans: 'Never Again' and 'Never Enough.'"

Jewish voices continue to express irritated incredulity at the distinction made between the sinlessness of the Church and the sins of her children. The analogy does not hold all the way, but

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in this connection I have found it helpful to point out the distinction between the Old Testament prophets who adamantly denounce the sins of the people of Israel while, at the same time, insisting that they are the elect people of God. With respect to both Israel and the Church, the accent is on the grace and faithfulness of God who continues to affirm the dignity of the people despite their so often acting in violation of that dignity. Moreover, in connection with the Holocaust it is useful to remember the enormous storm that broke over Hannah Arendt's *Eichmann in Jerusalem* in 1963. Arendt raised the exceedingly delicate question of the large number of Jews who not only did nothing to resist the Holocaust or to protect other Jews but who actually cooperated, out of whatever tortured motivations, in the rounding up, transport, and killing of Jews. Arendt was vociferously attacked by some Jews for "blaming the victims" and besmirching the integrity of Judaism itself.

Efforts to sort things out historically engage the much-disputed distinction between individual and collective responsibility. Regarding that distinction, the late Rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel was fond of saying, "Some are guilty; all are responsible." Applied to the image of the Church as the Mother of the faithful, it must surely be possible to find a way to say that she accepts responsibility for the actions of her children. She, although sinless, does not disown her sinful children. To change the image, Christ in his body on the cross bears the guilt of those who are members of his body, the Church. Of course analogies limp, but these are the kinds of tangled questions that must be explored more carefully as the concept of "the purification of memory" takes root, over time, in the consciousness of Christians and others.

Central to the misconstrual of what the Pope did is the assumption that he was issuing an apology. Apology is definitely not the right word, although it was persistently used in almost all the media reports and commentary. A late-night television show that would have been blasphemous were it not so juvenile ran footage of the Pope speaking with the voice-over, "I'm sorry. I'm *really* sorry, and I promise not to do it again." That was followed by the Jewish host saying that maybe Jews should apologize too. "We brought you some yentas [irritating women], but we also produced the bagel, which is pretty good, right?" There were only a few hesitant laughs from the audience, which otherwise seemed to have a bottomless appetite for vulgarities. The host, a very funny man, looked puzzled and wondered out loud if there were no Jews in the audience.

In fact, John Paul was not issuing an apology but was confessing to God, and on behalf of the sons and daughters of the Church, our failure to live lives worthy of the truth authoritatively taught by the Church. Far from throwing that teaching into doubt, he underscored that we are all held accountable to it. In all this he was setting an example and inviting others to engage in a comparable act of self-examination, confession, and repentance, acknowledging that all of us have in myriad ways betrayed the moral truths that we profess. Representative of the media's reaction, however, was the lead editorial of the *New York Times*, "The Pope's Apology." It was substantively the reaction of the television comedian, albeit with a long face. The editors smugly commend the Pope for an apology that will make it easier for the Church to "heal its relations with other faiths." They then quickly move on to complain about what he did not say.

The apology, they say, "was offered on behalf of the Church's 'sons and daughters,' but not the Church itself, which is considered holy." One might think the editors are raising a theological challenge to Catholic ecclesiology, but of course they are only scoring partisan points. "Nor," the complaint continues, "did John Paul directly address the sensitive issue of whether past popes, cardinals, and clergy—not just parishioners—also erred." That is, of course, patent nonsense. Bishops, cardinals, and popes are also "children of the Church" who have sinned. Why, do the editors suppose, does the Pope go to confession every week? Then there is this: "The Pope's apology for discrimination against women is welcome but difficult to square with his continued opposition to abortion and birth control, and to women in the priesthood. Regrettably, he made no mention of discrimination against homosexuals."

But of course John Paul did directly address abortion, birth control, and morally disordered sexuality when he spoke of "our responsibility for the evils of today." What the editors mean to say is that the Church's understanding of good and evil is "difficult to square" with their understanding of good and evil. As for the ordination of women, one eagerly awaits from Howell Raines and his editorial colleagues their theological study explaining why the biblical, patristic, and magisterial sources authorize the Catholic Church to approve of such an innovation in its sacramental order. The nub of the misconstrual by the editors—and one says this in fear of offending against a self-importance of narcissistic proportions—is their apparent inability to understand that the Pope was not apologizing to the *New York Times*. The editors assume the posture of being the infallible tribunal before which the Pope must make his case. They are prosecutor, jury, and

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judge, and they will decide when the Catholic Church's act of contrition is sufficient to warrant pardon, or at least a measure of clemency. Such towering arrogance would be amusing were it not so pathetic.

The Pope is keenly aware of the risks involved in the "purification of memory." Despite all, I believe he was right to take those risks. In sharpest contrast to the dominant evasions and mendacities of our time, evident not least of all in the media, the Pope has dramatically demonstrated how we are honestly to confess our sins, in the confidence of God's forgiveness and of grace for the amendment of life. In time, those who initially and self-righteously thought they were being offered an apology which they were in a moral position to either accept or reject might begin to understand and follow the example of courage and honesty that John Paul has set. Or they may continue to use it as yet another stick with which to flail their perceived opponents. The Church has survived much worse. The "purification of memory" is, first of all, about the integrity of the Church, and, despite initial misunderstandings and misconstruals, she is strengthened by acknowledging the truth about both the light and the shadows along the way of her earthly pilgrimage.

"Forgive us our trespasses . . ." Against the misconstruals of the Mass of Reconciliation on the First Sunday of Lent, one notes with deep gratification the very different response to the Pope's pilgrimage to the Holy Land, as reported in this issue by George Weigel. In fact it is against the background of such misconstruals, especially with reference to Jewish-Christian relations, that the achievement of the pilgrimage becomes so luminously clear. It is by such moments that the much overused word "historic" is properly defined.

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BLAMING BOB JONES

Among the nastier and more patently manipulative aspects of the presidential primary season was the accusation by the McCain campaign that George W. Bush is anti-Catholic because he spoke at Bob Jones University and did not take the occasion to challenge the view among some hard-core fundamentalists that the papacy is the Antichrist. Immediately, a horde of reporters and television crews (a horde meaning more than a dozen) were at the door or on the phone wanting to know what I made of Bush's alleged anti-Catholicism. They were generally disappointed to learn that I made nothing of it at all, and that because the charge against Bush was entirely bogus. A writer from the *New Republic* asked if I agreed with an article he was doing which claimed that the Bob Jones incident would break up the convergence between Catholics and evangelical Protestants represented by "Evangelicals and Catholics Together." He was obviously surprised and disappointed by my saying it would likely have quite the opposite effect. The animus against Catholics in this culture has very little to do with Bob Jones University and everything to do with the liberal-left elites who also make no secret of their disdain for evangelicals. It is hardly the strongest bond between them, but evangelicals and Catholics are also drawn together by recognizing who holds them both in contempt.

The partisan manipulation of the anti-Catholic issue is incisively addressed by Peter Steinfels of the *New York Times*. He notes along the way that the Democratic leaders who try to pin the anti-Catholic label on Republicans are the same people who have slammed their party's door against Catholics who dissent from, to cite the most obvious instance, its pro-abortion orthodoxy. Then there is the larger question about the source of anti-Catholicism in America. Steinfels writes: "Yes, anti-Catholic animus rooted in the theological polemics of the sixteenth-century Reformation still exists in the United States. But the anti-Catholic animus rooted in the political polemics of the eighteenth-century Enlightenment and the cultural polemics of nineteenth-century American nativism has long since taken over all the traditional themes. The Church is an authoritarian monolith; its doctrines are hopelessly premodern; its rites are colorful but mindless; its sexual standards are unnatural, repressive, and hypocritical; its congregations are anti-Semitic and racist; its priests are harsh and predatory; its grip on the minds of believers is numbing. These themes still ring in some fundamentalist pulpits. But they are far more apt to be interjected into the more adult sitcoms and late-night comedy, and to be reflected in films, editorials, art, fiction, and memoirs considered enlightened and liberating."

At a social event in Washington, Steinfels reports, a woman with an impressive reputation for supporting liberal and humanitarian causes was singing the praises of her daughter-in-law. "She's a Catholic, you know," and then quickly added, "but she's a thinking Catholic." Steinfels asks us to imagine that woman saying of someone, "She's an African American, you

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know, but she's an educated African American." A thinking Catholic, of course, is a Catholic who disagrees with the Church's teaching on regnant cultural and moral orthodoxies. In this view, as one has too many occasions to note, the only good Catholic is a bad Catholic.

Steinfels concludes: "Anti-Catholic animus is not keeping Catholics out of board rooms or country clubs, however, although it may complicate the careers of those in academic life, journalism, or some professional fields who don't make sure they are seen as 'thinking' Catholics. Anti-Catholicism would be a worthy subject for study and debate, freed, one hopes, from the manipulative politics of victimhood. But the place to begin is not Bob Jones University." One place to begin is with the anti-Catholic, and anti-evangelical, prejudices entrenched among those who, in a moment of partisan contortion, expressed such touching concern about the alleged anti-Catholicism in the current presidential race.

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SO WHAT'S THE BIG DEAL ABOUT PARTIAL-BIRTH ABORTION?

Outside the circles of pro-abortion extremism, almost all Americans are revulsed by partial-birth abortion. State after state has enacted bans against a gruesome procedure that kills babies within seconds and inches of their being unquestionably born. Just as regularly, federal courts have overruled the bans, claiming that they transgress against the abortion license guaranteed by *Roe v. Wade*. Now the question of partial-birth abortion is before the Supreme Court, and a great deal will turn on its ruling.

Meanwhile, however, Richard Stith, Professor of Law at Valparaiso University, notes that something very curious is happening. Partial-birth abortion is forcing a new judicial candor about other abortions as well, at least from the midterm of pregnancy. Sensible people may disagree about whether this new candor is promising or ominous.

Remember that *Roe v. Wade* decided that states cannot prohibit abortion based on a "theory" that life begins before birth. Today the pretense is being dropped that that is just a theory. Here, for instance, is Judge Richard Arnold of the Eighth Circuit Court of Appeals explaining why states cannot ban the killing of a "living unborn child" while it is in the process of being delivered. His language is graphic:

"In a D&E procedure, the physician inserts forceps into the uterus, grasps a part of the fetus, commonly an arm or a leg, and draws that part out of the uterus into the vagina. Using the traction created between the mouth of the cervix and the pull of the forceps, the physician dismembers the fetal part which has been brought into the vagina, and removes it from the woman's body. The rest of the fetus remains in the uterus while dismemberment occurs, and is often still living. . . . [Even in] a suction-curettage procedure where the fetus does not remain intact, part of the fetus which is still living may be drawn into the vagina before demise occurs."

In other words, Judge Arnold says, such ordinary abortions must also be considered "partial-birth" abortions, since the fact is that death is the result after the abortionist "delivers" part or parts of the baby. Judge Richard Posner of the Seventh Circuit makes essentially the same point as Judge Arnold, although he focuses not on the sameness of technique but on the sameness of outcome in partial-birth abortions and other abortions:

"From the standpoint of the fetus, and, I should think, of any rational person, it makes no difference whether, when the skull is crushed, the fetus is entirely within the uterus or its feet are outside the uterus. Yet the position of the feet is the only difference between committing a felony and performing an act that the states concede is constitutionally privileged. . . . [T]here is no meaningful difference between the forbidden and the privileged practice. No reason of policy or morality that would allow the one would forbid the other."

Judge Posner does not deny that partial-birth abortion is "gruesome." His point is that other abortions, certainly from the second trimester on, are also gruesome. Posner even indicates some sympathy for those who want to prohibit those other abortions:

"I do not mean to criticize anyone who believes, whether because of religious conviction, nonsectarian moral conviction, or simply a prudential belief that upholding the sacredness of human life whatever the circumstances is necessary to prevent us from sliding into barbarism, that abortion is always wrong and perhaps particularly so in late pregnancy, since all methods of late-term abortion are gruesome. . . . But what is at stake in these cases is whether the people who feel that way are entitled to coerce a woman who feels differently to behave as they would in her situation."

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So where are we then? Prof. Stith writes, "The United States Supreme Court for many years inhibited serious discussion of abortion by using its immense prestige to encourage doubt about what abortion actually does. Perhaps surprisingly, opponents of partial-birth abortion were able to use this doubt to their legislative advantage." But Judge Posner incisively points out that "public support for the [partial-birth abortion bans] was [in part] based . . . on sheer ignorance of the medical realities of late-term abortion. The uninformed thought the [partial-birth] procedure gratuitously cruel, akin to infanticide; they didn't realize that the only difference between it and the methods of late-term abortion that are conceded all round to be constitutionally privileged is which way the fetus' feet are pointing."

The publicity about, and consequent opposition to, partial-birth abortion rendered a great service in educating the public on how extreme is the abortion license created by *Roe v. Wade*. On the other hand, the new judicial candor about what happens in "ordinary" abortions may lead some to the conclusion that partial-birth abortion is not qualitatively different and therefore, however regrettable, must be accepted. The more hopeful possibility, of course, is that a better-informed public will conclude that the killing of babies is a monstrous evil and must be outlawed. Put positively, the conclusion should be that we must work toward the goal of the pro-life movement: every child, born and unborn, protected in law and welcomed in life.

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THE POPE AT THE NATIONAL PRAYER BREAKFAST

The National Prayer Breakfast, now in its fiftieth year, has been mainly a Protestant affair, with more recent overlappings into the interreligious and generalized civil religion. Always addressed by the President, the breakfast gathers most members of Congress and hundreds of others variously linked to national leadership. This year, Pope John Paul II was invited to address the breakfast and, while he could not be present in person, he sent an extended message that was read by the Apostolic Nuncio, Archbishop Gabriel Montalvo. The Pope began with, "Christ yesterday and today, the beginning and the end, Alpha and Omega; all time belongs to him and all the ages; to him be glory and power through every age for ever. Amen." Then followed reflections on the way of salvation, Christian unity, the responsibility of the U.S. in world history, and the strengths and temptations of democracy. Herewith some excerpts:

> Two weeks ago, leaders from Christian denominations worldwide joined me in opening the Holy Door at the basilica of Saint Paul, and together we crossed its threshold. That was an eloquent sign of our commitment to ensure that, in the millennium just beginning, Christians will give ever fuller expression to that unity which is Christ's gift to his Church, so that together we may cross the threshold of hope in openness to the future which God in his providence holds out to us.
>
> This great project—the building of a world more worthy of the human person, a society which can foster a renaissance of the human spirit—calls also for that sense of moral responsibility which flows from commitment to truth: "walking the path of truth," as the Apostle John puts it (3 John 3). And such a moral responsibility, by its very nature, cannot be reduced to a purely private matter. The light of Christ should illumine every thought, word, and action of believers; there is no area of personal or social life which it is not meant to penetrate, enliven, and make fruitful. The spread of a purely utilitarian approach to the great moral issues of public life points to the urgent need for a rigorous and reasoned public discourse about the moral norms that are the foundation of any just society. A living relationship with the truth, Scripture teaches, is the very source and condition of authentic and lasting freedom (cf. John 8:32).
>
> Your nation was built as an experiment in ordered freedom, an experiment in which the exercise of individual freedom would contribute to the common good. The American separation of Church and State as institutions was accompanied from the beginning of your Republic by the conviction that strong religious faith, and the public expression of religiously informed judgments, contribute significantly to the moral health of the body politic. Within the fabric of your national life a particular moral authority has been entrusted to you who are invested with political responsibility as representatives of the

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American people. In the great Western democratic tradition, men and women in political life are servants of the polis in its fullest sense—as a moral and civil commonwealth. They are not mere brokers of power in a political process taking place in a vacuum, cut off from private and public morality. Leadership in a true democracy involves much more than simply the mastering of techniques of political "management": your vocation as "representatives" calls for vision, wisdom, a spirit of contemplation, and a passion for justice and truth.

Looking back on my own lifetime, I am convinced that the epoch-making changes taking place and the challenges appearing at the dawn of this new millennium call for just such a "prophetic" function on the part of religious believers in public life. And, may I say, this is particularly true of you who represent the American people, with their rich heritage of commitment to freedom and equality under the law, their spirit of independence and commitment to the common good, their self-reliance and generosity in sharing their God-given gifts. In the century just ended, this heritage became synonymous with freedom itself for people throughout the world, as they sought to cast off the shackles of totalitarianism and to live in freedom. As one who is personally grateful for what America did for the world in the darkest days of the twentieth century, allow me to ask: will America continue to inspire people to build a truly better world, a world in which freedom is ordered to truth and goodness? Or will America offer the example of a pseudo-freedom, which, detached from the moral norms that give life direction and fruitfulness, turns in practice into a narrow and ultimately inhuman self-enslavement, one which smothers people's spirits and dissolves the foundations of social life?

These questions pose themselves in a particularly sharp way when we confront the urgent issue of protecting every human being's inalienable right to life from conception until natural death. This is the great civil rights issue of our time, and the world looks to the United States for leadership in cherishing every human life and in providing legal protection for all the members of the human community, but especially those who are weakest and most vulnerable.

For religious believers who bear political responsibility, our times offer a daunting yet exhilarating challenge. I would go so far as to say that their task is to save democracy from self-destruction. Democracy is our best opportunity to promote the values that will make the world a better place for everyone, but a society which exalts individual choice as the ultimate source of truth undermines the very foundation of democracy.

If there is no objective moral order which everyone must respect, and if each individual is expected to supply his or her own truth and ethic of life, there remains only the path of contractual mechanisms as the way of organizing our living together in society. In such a society the strong will prevail and the weak will be swept aside. As I have written elsewhere, "If there is no ultimate truth to guide and direct political action, then ideas and convictions can easily be manipulated for reasons of power. As history demonstrates, a democracy without values easily turns into open or thinly disguised totalitarianism" (*Centesimus Annus*).

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SECULARIZATION IN THEORY AND FACT

Many of the most influential secularization theorists have been Europeans, especially German and French. Since the eighteenth century and up to the present—albeit with fits and starts and many convolutions—it does seem that Western Europe has been on a course of inexorable secularization. In both public and personal life, the institutions, observances, and teachings associated with religion—in this case meaning Christianity—appear to be ever more marginal, giving credibility to the idea that there is a necessary connection between modernity and secularity. The more modern a society, the more secular it will become. In this context, scholars regularly spoke about "American exceptionalism." Why is it, they asked, that the United States, presumably the most modern of societies, is so vibrantly religious? America was thought to be the exception that had to be explained. In recent years, however, more and more

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scholars have come to the conclusion that Europe is the anomaly, leading to talk about "European exceptionalism." (Meaning mainly Western Europe, since Central and Eastern European societies show very different patterns.)

In 1997 Samuel P. Huntington of Harvard published *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order*, advancing an argument that continues to generate lively interest. Contrary to long-entrenched expectations, we witness a world in which different civilizations—defined by different cultures that are typically defined, in turn, by cult or religion—are the deciding factor in collective allegiances and conflicts. Huntington's proposal flies in the face of the widespread assumption that the world is being homogenized into a "global village" where everybody becomes more and more alike. The economic and technological dynamics of "globalization" are indeed powerful, but they are far from being omnipotent. And some aspects of globalization, such as the explosion of communications technology, can expand and strengthen religio-cultural diversity in a world that is, at the same time, both linked and divided by a near-infinite number of electronic bands, channels, websites, and whatever comes next.

Such is the larger context in which we are invited to think about religion, culture, and secularization. Were the legendary man or woman from Mars to show up and ask what is the single most important thing now happening on Planet Earth, many possible answers might come to mind. Were I put on the spot in that unlikely circumstance, I think I would say that the most important thing now happening on Planet Earth is the *de*secularization of world history.

Our immediate business, however, is not quite so global in its reach, although it is not always easy to distinguish between what is American and what is global. It is now the case that several generations of Americans have been taught, from grade school through graduate school, that ours is a secular society, or is rapidly becoming such. Whether the subject is sexual mores, family life, the work ethic, or attitudes toward wealth, death, and dying, the textbooks are replete with generic statements such as: "In earlier times, people sought answers to these questions in religion, but in our secular society _____." The student is invited to fill in the blank or, more commonly, to accept the answer provided by the writer of the textbook who simply knows, as everybody supposedly knows, that "traditional" belief and morality are no longer relevant. What we in fact know is something very different, even if there is no agreement on how to explain it: American society is as religious and, in some ways, probably more religious than it ever has been.

More than thirty years ago, in 1967, my longtime colleague and friend Peter Berger published *The Sacred Canopy*. Berger has subsequently and substantively changed his thinking about religion and secularization, but the theory set forth in that book continues to have enormous influence on the discussion of these questions. Once upon a time, according to this theory, people lived in societies that were covered by a sacred canopy of religious meaning; there were traditional and taken-for-granted truths that explained the world and their part in it. Then came along modernity with its scientific, specializing, and fragmenting explanations of reality that challenged and shattered what had been a "sacred cosmos." With modernity, said Max Weber, an earlier social theorist, the world became "disenchanted." In the middle of the last century, the German New Testament scholar Rudolf Bultmann opined that people who had learned to use an electric light switch could no longer believe that God makes things happen. For "modern man" the world had been "demythologized," and Bultmann set out to demythologize the Christian gospel as well, stripping it of its miraculous and supernatural elements and making it once again believable to a world of educated grownups.

A Choice of Theories

Berger was never a Bultmannian in theology, but the early Berger offered a similar account of the corrosive effect of modernity on religious faith. The crisis for religion, he said in *The Sacred Canopy* and other writings, is how to maintain the "plausibility structure" of traditional religion in a world that does not think religious truth claims are plausible. One answer is for religious groups to create a "sheltered enclave" in which believers huddle together and reinforce one another in their conviction that the old stories with their old truths still define the really real "real world." The problem, of course, is that most people cannot live full time in the sheltered enclave; they also participate in the real world of modernity with its conflicting explanations of how the world works. The result is that people experience "cognitive dissonance," which can be painfully disorienting. What I "know" about reality when, for instance, participating in the enclave's ritual enactment of the sacred story is very different from what I "know" when going about my everyday business in the modern world.

Some people can apparently live quite contentedly with the most severe cognitive dissonance simply by not thinking about it. They don't pay much attention

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to the clashing dissonance between what they think inside and what they think outside the enclave. More thoughtful people, however, have to negotiate some kind of truce between these conflicting worlds, and this results in "cognitive bargaining," which typically means trimming religious truth claims to fit the "real world" of relentlessly secular modernity. The theory of early Berger and those who followed him is similar in important ways to current ideas associated with "postmodernism." In fact, with Thomas Luckmann, Berger wrote in 1966 *The Social Construction of Reality*, a book that anticipated postmodernists who contend that all meaning systems, including modern rationality, are "socially constructed." What we call reality is no more than the stories—whether we choose to call them religious or secular—that we make up as we go along. While Berger has greatly revised his earlier thinking and regrets the uses to which others have put it, the "sheltered enclave" theory continues to be an influential explanation of why religion flourishes in an otherwise modern and secular society such as the United States.

Other scholars have preferred the "status discontent" theory. According to this explanation, religious groups, especially those of a conservative or fundamentalist hue, mobilize themselves in reaction to perceived threats to their social standing or security. In the 1950s, Richard Hofstadter, Daniel Bell, and others employed this theory to explain the emergence of a political right wing in American public life. Echoes of the status discontent theory are still routine in the mainline media's treatment of what is called "the religious right." As a story in the *Washington Post* put it a few years ago (the editors later apologized), these people are "poor, uneducated, and easily led." And they are easily led because they are easily frightened by changes favored by the rich and educated which they do not understand and which they see as threatening to their way of life.

Another explanation of why religion can flourish in an otherwise secular society might be called the "strictness" theory. This gained currency with the late Dean Kelley's 1972 book, *Why Conservative Churches Are Growing*. Kelley produced massive evidence on the decline of liberal or "mainline" churches, in contrast to conservative churches that were enjoying a bull market. In some ways Kelley's thesis was similar to early Berger, but he did not place so much emphasis upon the "cognitive." Doctrines, ideas, and what Kelley called "notions" are less important than the actual demands that a religious group imposes. The more demanding a religion, the more likely it is to succeed. "We want something more," Kelley wrote,

> than a smooth, articulate verbal interpretation of what life is all about. Words are cheap; we want explanations that are validated by the commitment of other persons. . . . What costs nothing accomplishes nothing. If it costs nothing to belong to a community, it can't be worth much. So the quality that enables religious meanings to take hold is not their rationality, their logic, their surface credibility, but rather the *demand* they make upon their adherents and the degree to which that demand is met by *commitment*.

Some students of American religion have taken part of Kelley's strictness theory and given it a turn along the lines of the "rational choice" theory that so fascinates many contemporary economists. In this view, which is notably associated with Laurence Iannaccone, strict religions are successful not so much because they provide more intact communities of meaning but because they tend to exclude "free riders." Free riders are, quite simply, people who are just along for the ride; they take what they want from a group but give little or nothing in return. Liberal groups are full of free riders; indeed, such groups typically make it one of their selling points that they place no demands on those to whom they appeal. This has the attraction of being "accepting" and "open." Since, however, free riders make little contribution to what people are looking for in religion—in terms of inspiration, fellowship, strong conviction, and communal security—liberal groups tend to spawn apathy and a lack of direction, which is a sure formula for institutional decline.

Also stealing a card from the economists are the proponents of "religious marketing" theory. In this theory, social pluralism, which is commonly thought to be hostile to religion, is in fact the best friend of religious flourishing. The claim is that, in societies where religion appears to be strong and even to enjoy a monopoly in providing the "sacred canopy," it is in fact weak and fragile. It is no accident, according to market theorists, that secularization is so far advanced in countries such as England, France, and Germany that have culturally (and, in different ways, legally) established churches, or that religious indifference is so widespread in Latin American countries that have a taken for granted "Catholic culture."

In the United States it has been very different. In their much discussed 1992 book, *The Churching of America 1776-1990: Winners and Losers in Our Religious Economy*, Roger Finke and Rodney Stark argued that competition has been the very

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lifeblood of American religion. They produce impressive evidence to show that, contrary to commonly held assumptions, religion does better in pluralistic cities than in small towns and rural areas. Moreover, they contend, church attendance has steadily increased during the course of American history as we have become, all in all, a more religious, not a less religious, nation.

The economic factors of competition and marketing are not, it must be admitted, the most edifying way of thinking about religion, but they are useful in understanding what I mean by the incorrigibility of Christian America. These are approaches to religion employed by "social scientists" who presumably refrain from making what are called value judgments. "Just the facts, ma'am," as Sergeant Joe Friday put it. Remember, too, that economic dynamics are part of being human, and nothing that is human is alien to Christianity, the most humanistic of religions. What else could Christianity be, since its central teaching is that God became a human being in Jesus Christ in order that everything human might be redeemed through him? This theological reminder is a caution against dismissing the analyses under discussion as "merely economic" or "merely sociological." In the biblical understanding of things, there is nothing mere about any dimension of the human condition.

That having been said, however, social scientists who understand both the usefulness and limitations of their craft know that the religious phenomenon, at its heart and in its totality, escapes the nets of social theory and analysis. Not only in its elevated forms of literary expression but also in the popular piety of revival meetings, Bible study groups, and the millions of people at daily Mass, religion engages the supernatural, metaphysical, and mystical. In ways unarticulated and perhaps beyond articulation, people are encountered by God, by the ineffable. Or so in various ways they say they believe, and believe with varying degrees of certitude. The theories and statistics of sociology are to religion as sexology is to the act of love. They are not to be confused with the thing itself. Yet it is unavoidable that we employ instruments such as statistics even as we are skeptical about them. As one wag put it, "It has been statistically demonstrated that most statistics are wrong." In any event, those who during most of the twentieth century were weaving statistics and theories into a grand and confidently told story of the secularization of the world are now having to cope with a quite different story that seems to be writing itself.

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WHILE WE'RE AT IT

■ In 1993, as the hysteria over child sex abuse cases was beginning to decline in the U.S., charges started flying around a reform school for boys in Shelburne, Nova Scotia. One former employee was convicted of abuse and died in jail. The case received wide publicity and soon hundreds of other claims of abuse, going back as far as fifty years, were lodged. In the hope of avoiding huge damages from lawsuits, the province set up a fund of $25 million to buy off other complainants. The province then had the bright idea of advertising its offer and, not surprisingly, thousands of complaints flooded in. In prisons, lawyers posted what inmates called "the meat chart," an official compensation scale that ranged from $3,500 for physical abuse up to $85,000 for sexual assault. The payoff fund was soon depleted, so the legislature added another $8 million to it. As a result, nearly all of the hundreds of employees who had worked at Shelburne over the years were charged without a chance to learn who had accused them of what. Those administering the fund accepted charges at their face value, because as Anne Derrik, a lawyer for 450 former residents, put it, "There are no records. There are no witnesses." As a Toronto reporter noted, "Employees who had dedicated their lives to helping troubled kids are now seeing their names, reputations, and life work smeared forever by allegations of hideous crimes they never committed." The prize for the most callously dumb statement goes to lawyer Derrik, who allowed that "there is undoubtedly a certain amount of fraud," but questioned why the accused were angry, noting that "the money is not coming out of their pockets." Perhaps she vaguely misremembers from her school days Shakespeare's saying, "Who steals my good name steals trash."

■ Remember the new painting of the epicene Jesus touted by the *National Catholic Reporter* as "someone who celebrates our differences"? In the revised version of Mark 1, the man with an unclean spirit cries out, "What have you to do with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are—the Holy One of God!" and Jesus reassures him saying, "Relax. I have come to celebrate our differences." As is so often the case, life beggars parody. Here is the comment on the same passage in *Celebrating the Eucharist*, the Mass guide published by Liturgical Press and used by thousands of Catholic parishes. After Jesus cast out the unclean spirit, we read in Mark that "All were amazed and asked one

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another, 'What is this? A new teaching with authority. He commands even the unclean spirits and they obey him.'" *Celebrating the Eucharist* comments: "Jesus' authority is not a 'power over' but a truth that calls forth life. His is an authority that derives from modeling how a true servant of God lives." If I get this right, the problem with the evil spirits is that they wanted to serve God but lacked an adequate role model until Jesus came along. In Mark it is said, "The unclean spirit convulsed the man and with a loud cry came out of him." In the psychobabbled Mass guide, one infers that the unclean spirit said something like, "Thanks, Jesus, I needed that." There are no convulsions or loud cries, although one imagines there might be some gagging in the pews.

■ The American Anglican Council, which understands itself to be a biblical renewal movement within the Episcopal Church, says that the consecration of two American bishops in Singapore last January creates "a new reality" for Episcopalianism. The new bishops are to be missionaries in the U.S., providing episcopal oversight for conservative parishes in liberal dioceses. A year earlier, the Council had issued a "Jubilee Initiative" that called for the creation of "alternative oversight" for both liberal parishes in conservative dioceses and conservative parishes in liberal dioceses. But the initiative was ignored by the Presiding Bishop's office in the U.S. "The Jubilee Initiative," says the Council, "is a commonsense proposal intended to foster unity." Since in historic Christianity the bishop is supposed to be a sign of unity, it may be difficult for outsiders to understand how bishops selected to serve on the basis of theological and ideological divides can foster unity. In any event, the Council joins others in hoping that the Anglican Primates (bishops leading various provinces of the Anglican communion) will be able to come up with a way to stem further divisions.

■ Should President Clinton have been removed from office? Should he have been impeached in the first place? Tod Lindberg, editor of *Policy Review*, offers a different take on these questions in "Necessary Impeachments, Necessary Acquittals." He notes that in our constitutional history there have been four impeachments followed by four acquittals, each the occasion of "epic confrontations"—Supreme Court Justice Samuel Chase in 1804, Judge James Hawkins Peck in 1830, President Andrew Johnson in 1868, and President Clinton in 1999. In each case, Lindberg argues, the acquittals resulted from the fact that the confrontation was really over something other than the specific charges of the impeachment. He writes: "The facts about Clinton's misconduct in trying to conceal his relationship with Monica Lewinsky were stubborn and damning. No President should do what Clinton did, and his name will forever bear the mark of impeachment for it. Yet it would have been impossible to remove Clinton without simultaneously vindicating the process by which he came to stand trial in the Senate—which is to say, without vindicating the House's deference to and reliance on independent counsel Kenneth Starr's investigation, the conduct of the Starr investigation in all its particulars, and the authority for the investigation, the independent counsel statute itself. And it is noteworthy that within the year, the statute was gone, bringing to an end its twenty-year disfiguration of our political system." So the Senate trial was really, as many of Clinton's defenders claimed, about Kenneth Starr and, as a few said, about the independent counsel statute. It is an interesting but not persuasive argument. It overlooks the fact that many Clinton defenders and some Senators who voted to acquit claimed that the whole thing was no more than a matter of Republicans trying to get rid of a President they intensely disliked, a claim reinforced by the partisan lines of the final vote. More troubling, however, is that the Senators went forward one by one to sign a solemn oath that they would make their decision on the basis of the articles of impeachment—not on the basis of whether they approved of the actions of Kenneth Starr, and certainly not as a vote on the independent counsel statute. The trouble is compounded by the fact that at least some who voted to acquit had publicly said that they thought Clinton was guilty as charged. If it is true, as Lindberg suggests, that a Senate vote in the impeachment process is less about the charges brought than about the complex circumstances that produced the charges and the impeachment in the first place, then perhaps the wording of the oath should be changed. There is something very wrong with a practice that puts Senators in a position of solemnly swearing to do what they do not intend to do.

■ The following comment, inserted only hours before the deadline for this issue, replaces an item on the role of the National Council of Churches (NCC) in the Elián González affair. That item noted that the NCC had for months served as the mouthpiece for the curiously shared position of the Castro regime and the Clinton Administration. The NCC has a very long record of moral bankruptcy, and in the last year its financial bankruptcy, too, has been widely publicized. At this point we do not know where it got the money to pay for charter airplanes

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for its Havana-Washington shuttle, or for other undoubtedly considerable expenses in its campaign to return Elián to Cuba, including the hiring of President Clinton's impeachment lawyer, Gregory Craig. Suffice it to say that the part played by the NCC in this sordid business is morally contemptible and warrants the clear condemnation of its member churches. As for the forcible seizure of Elián in Miami, I write in the immediate aftermath of the thuggish night raid of Holy Saturday by heavily armed federal agents who have been aptly compared to storm troopers. It is not an excess of outrage but sober reflection that compels a chilling comparison with the Waco catastrophe. It is no mitigation to say that nobody was killed in Miami. The raiders clearly indicated they would shoot if they met with resistance. Once again, the Clinton Justice Department treated this as a hostage situation although Elián was in no way a hostage. Once again, Attorney General Janet Reno and her enforcers brushed aside the law—in this case a federal appeals court decision favorable to the Miami relatives—in order to meet their own unilateral and arbitrary deadline for action. This despite the fact that a number of alternatives were under discussion, including an offer by the Holy See to arrange the boy's transfer at the nuncio's residence in Washington. Once again, Ms. Reno sought to justify the action by claiming to possess "intelligence" that her opponents had weapons and thus posed a threat requiring immediate action, in this case a night raid in the middle of the Easter weekend. Once again, the government claimed to be concerned about child abuse, citing the speculation of a hired psychological expert who had never met the boy, who to all appearances was quite happy and lovingly cared for. What law warranted the raid? None. What was the hurry in removing the boy? The hubris of a government wanting to save face by doing what it said it would do. Since Elián's rescue from the sea on Thanksgiving Day, thoughtful people have been divided as to what should be done. Weighing the rights of the father and the interests of the child, many were reluctantly resigned to the boy's eventual return to Cuba. On that score, reasonable people can disagree. But the night raid of Holy Saturday—smashing into the home of American citizens who were not breaking the law nor even accused of breaking the law, seizing a terrified boy at gunpoint—is further evidence of a Justice Department that is dangerously unhinged. In the past eight years, President Clinton has done many things to undermine confidence in the rule of law. To the extent that he supports Ms. Reno and her storm trooper tactics, he makes additionally persuasive the judgment that this administration is a grave threat to our constitutional order and the civil rights of all Americans.

■ *Crisis* magazine has been doing some numbers-crunching on the Catholic electorate and now turns to the similarities and dissimilarities between Catholics and evangelical Protestants. On the big questions in public life, says researcher Steven Wagner, there is a growing convergence between the two groups. Along the way, he notes that a very small fraction of those surveyed have received voting advice from their clergy (5 percent for active Catholics, 2 percent for evangelical conservatives), and only 15 percent in both groups were contacted by a religious or moral advocacy organization at election time. "These results," Wagner writes, "belie the image of evangelical churches as hotbeds of political activism." While there are differences between Catholics and evangelical conservatives, they "are trivial compared with the political schisms between religiously active and religiously inactive voters." Wagner writes: "This conclusion is particular to the current political moment. At another time, under different political circumstances, active Catholics and evangelicals might find themselves on opposite sides of the barricades. But at this political moment, these two groups are united by a common diagnosis of the social crisis and a common desire for an agenda of social and cultural reconstruction. We stand together just now at the side of the road with thumbs out, waiting for a political leadership to come along that will lead us forward."

■ It does not mitigate the shame of Princeton in giving him a tenured chair, but the more Peter Singer is allowed to talk and write the more he exposes the looniness of his garage sale utilitarianism built on his version of the principle that everyone should count for one and no more than one. A concomitant principle is that a "morally decent" person will give away to the poor everything he does not need to maintain the basics of life as defined very basically. A number of writers have challenged Singer's spending large sums of money on the care of his mother in Australia who is suffering from Alzheimer's. The question is raised again in an interview with the Princeton alumni weekly. Isn't he violating his own principles? Singer answers, "Yes. In a sense, my spending money on my mother's care is in conflict with that principle. But so is the fact that I flew back to Australia to visit my daughters at Christmas. That money could also be better spent elsewhere. I've never claimed that I live my life perfectly in accordance with those principles of sharing my

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money as much as I should." Apparently it is not necessary to obey the rules of moral decency to be a morally decent person. In the interview, Singer says again that "babies become persons when they develop some kind of awareness of themselves existing over time. That happens sometime during the first year of life but not in the first month of life." Previously, Singer had proposed that the law should allow the killing of disabled infants in the first twenty-eight days after birth. "But I no longer think that that will work. It's too arbitrary." The suggestion is that decisions about killing infants should be made on a case-by-case basis. Singer is asked whether his being an atheist affects his philosophy. "It probably does, although there are some theists who would reach the same conclusions. But it's certainly easier to reach them if you are not religious. And probably people who are strongly committed to the traditional religions like Christianity would not be likely to come up with the same views that I hold." Peter Singer is one of those people whose vestigial sanity is saved by their inconsistencies.

■ "A world trading system already exists; a world government does not, and in many quarters the very concept evokes resistance." So say the editors of *America*, the Jesuit weekly. "Christians believe that neither this nor any other hope for the future can be realized without grace, and so until the end of the ages they will continue to pray: 'Thy kingdom come.'" To think that all this time we've been praying for a world government.

■ Writing in the *London Review of Books*, historian Norman Finkelstein deplores the exploitation and vulgarization of the Holocaust. There is, for instance, the question of who is and who is not a "Holocaust survivor." He quotes the director of the Yad Vashem archive in Israel who says that the testimonies of most survivors are unreliable: "Many were never in the places where they claim to have witnessed atrocities, while others relied on secondhand information given them by friends or passing strangers." Finkelstein comments, "Because survivors are revered as secular saints, one doesn't dare question them." The term "Holocaust survivor" originally referred to those who suffered the trauma of the Jewish ghettos, concentration camps, or labor camps, and at the end of the war the number of such people was thought to be about a hundred thousand. Recently the Israeli Prime Minister's office stated that there are nearly a million living survivors. Finkelstein's mother, who really was a Holocaust survivor, used to ask him, "If everyone who claims to be a survivor actually is one, who did Hitler kill?" Claiming to be a survivor is, of course, not unrelated to sundry demands for reparations from countries and corporations. The pattern of mendacity described by Finkelstein is both distasteful and dangerous. The great danger is that it plays into the hands of the Holocaust deniers. There are some who accuse those who expose the pattern of mendacity of aiding the deniers, but that strikes me as thoroughly wrongheaded. The truth about the Holocaust can be preserved only by a relentless commitment to truth.

■ It is perhaps not entirely a coincidence that Anthony Lewis, a great champion of judicial activism, is married to the recently appointed head of the top court in Massachusetts. In a recent column, Lewis takes on those who confuse democracy with majority rule, including some writers associated with this journal. The making of law and protection of rights, Lewis contends, must rest with an independent institution "not subject to the mercies of the majority or the minority." That institution is the judiciary. He invokes in support of his argument the president of the Supreme Court of Israel, Aharon Barak, who said in a 1998 speech, "One of the lessons of the Second World War and the Holocaust is that it is vital to place formal limits on the power of the majority. The concept 'It is not done' needs to receive the formal expression 'It is forbidden.'" Really? Hitler, who was not elected by a majority, abolished majority rule and replaced representative democracy with a system of dictatorial command that included the courts. Was the "It is *verboten*" of the Nazi system an advance over the customary "It is not done" of German tradition? One might argue that the example invoked by Judge Barak supports exactly the opposite of what he and Mr. Lewis advocate. In any event, the case that law should be made in a way that is not subject to the mercies of the majority or the minority (i.e., not accountable to the people) must, in a democracy, be submitted to the people. Whether in the U.S. or Israel, one expects that the people will not rule in favor of that proposal. Which, of course, is why Mr. Lewis thinks the people should not rule.

■ A couple of months ago we ran here an entertaining story about a New Orleans fellow who had to trace a property deed to get a loan from the FHA. You may remember it. If you don't, no matter. While a reliable source vouched for the story's authenticity, several readers have convincingly argued that it is apocryphal. So if you do remember it, please forget it.

■ There has been an enormous fracas over the Israeli government's permitting militant Muslims to

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build a mosque next to the Basilica of the Annunciation in Nazareth. Father Drew Christiansen, S.J., a man with extensive experience in the tangled affairs of the Middle East, offers some sage counsel: "Already some officials and organizational leaders have hinted that any criticism of Israeli government policy in the Nazareth affair will be perceived ipso facto as anti-Semitic. The foreign ministry spokesman Avis Sharon, for example, already accused the Holy See of playing 'a time-honored game of pointing the finger in the wrong direction' in opposing the Israeli government's role in the crisis. Christians should be able to defend their coreligionists against violent intimidation anywhere, including Israel, and they should be able to expect support of those who regard themselves as guardians of religious liberty. Many Jews and Muslims, in Israel and elsewhere, fully understand this. In a mature Catholic-Jewish relationship, moreover, it should be possible to distinguish between support for Israel and criticism of Israeli government policies. Likewise, in a mature Catholic-Muslim relationship, it should be possible to distinguish between respect for Islam and criticism of militants pursuing their own ends in the name of Islam. If Christian solidarity with the church of the Holy Land results in a new level of dialogue and a new quality of relationship with Jews and Muslims in the United States, perhaps some good may still come from the affair in Nazareth. Such progress in Catholic-Jewish and Catholic-Muslim relations, however, must never lose sight of the pain of Israel's Christians made so sorely public in the crisis over the Nazareth square."

■ Believe me, it is no denigration of Oklahoma when I say that it is not the place one might have expected it. There in the foothills of the Ozarks, some fifty miles east of Tulsa, at an otherwise forsaken spot called Clear Creek, the abbey of Fontgombault in France has for the first time established a Benedictine monastery in the U.S. Fontgombault is associated with the Congregation of Solesmes, from which issued the great liturgical renewal, including the revival of Gregorian chant, in the nineteenth century, laying the foundations for the liturgical movement of the twentieth. The new foundation at Clear Creek begins with thirteen monks, and was inaugurated on February 11 (Our Lady of Lourdes) with Abbot Antoine Forgeot having some memorable things to say about the contemplative life. "Our monasteries and our monks do not involve themselves directly in pastoral activity, except for spiritual assistance given to persons on retreat at the Guesthouse. It is this desire for a strictly contemplative life which drew many vocations from America to Fontgombault for more than twenty-five years. . . . The contemplative life which we try to observe according to the Rule of St. Benedict is nothing more than Christian life in the presence of God, in His house and in His intimacy. St. Benedict defines the monastery as a 'school of the service of the Lord.' The monastery is a school where one learns to search God truly, to love Him and to serve Him. It is a school where one does the apprenticeship of eternal life. . . . Monks live separated from the world without being cut off from it. This separation renders them all the more attentive to the true needs of the world. They keep in their prayers all the concerns and yearnings of this world. The monastic cloister might seem to you rather austere and severe. However, in the measure in which you can respect the cloister yourselves, you will more understand its meaning and price. . . . The monastery church, even if it may be very modest like this chapel of Clear Creek, is the heart of our life. The church is the center of the activity of the monks. They gather here seven times during the day and once each night in order to sing the praises of God and to offer the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass." By permission of the Holy See, the monastery uses the preconciliar rite. The abbot remarks: "The Divine Office and the Mass are habitually celebrated in Latin and in Gregorian chant, which are inseparable. Experience shows that the use of Latin and Gregorian does not hinder the participation of the faithful. Latin Gregorian chant is not less active. It is even more spiritual and fruitful. The Church depends upon contemplatives for this liturgical apostolate which leads souls to a more profound and interior spiritual life." And, of course, there is the Benedictine *ora et labora*. "Like all the sons and daughters of Adam, monks are obligated by the law of work. Saint Benedict attaches a great importance to manual labor. His monks are to do themselves as much as possible in order to take care of their own needs. There is always very much work to do, especially in the beginning of a new monastery. This abundance of work is good for the brethren. Everybody makes his contribution. Everyone sacrifices himself generously and joyously for the common good of all the monastic family. This not only serves to satisfy the needs of the community, but is also profitable for the physiological balance and spiritual life of the monks." Bishop Edward Slattery of Tulsa also spoke at the inaugural Mass, commending the monks for their "unshakable confidence that here in Oklahoma we could confound the world with the witness of men who prefer nothing to Christ." Comparing the monks

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with the jars that were filled at the wedding of Cana, the bishop said, "He will fill you, in His own time and by whatever means He chooses to do so. You have only to wait for Him, listen for His voice, and be attentive to Him speaking in the authority of your superiors and the weakness of your brother." Imagine. In Oklahoma. In the United States of America. Now that is what is meant by countercultural.

■ Peter Steinfels is not the only one with intelligent comment on the dustup over George W. Bush and Bob Jones University. William McGurn of the *Wall Street Journal* is amusing, if not amused: "The point here being that the dominant media emotion surrounding L'affaire Bob Jones is not 'outrage' but barely disguised glee. Maybe that's because the necks most firmly attached to anti-Catholicism today are not red; they bear pashmina shawls and Hermes ties, and they prefer white wine to white hoods. Why burn a cross on a Catholic lawn when you can fill museums with works like *Piss Christ*, theaters with films such as Miramax's *Priest* and *Dogma*, or the daily papers with headlines such as the recent one claiming Catholic priests are four times as likely to contract AIDS as other American men, this an extrapolation from just *seven* infected priests. As the historian Peter R. Viereck wrote four decades ago, 'Catholic-baiting is the anti-Semitism of the liberals.' . . . The real sin of Bob Jones is not anti-Catholicism per se. It is the institution's unfamiliarity with the proper mechanics and code words that polite society uses to express it. Imagine the reaction had reporters covering Mr. Bush's Bob Jones kick-off found a large dung-and-porn-encrusted Madonna placed at the front entrance. But put that same painting in a Brooklyn museum . . ."

■ In the Orthodox Church the tradition is that priests are married and bishops are monks, which is to say celibate. Now it seems there is a decreasing number of married priests, creating the prospect that, according to Father Efstathios Kollas, director of the Pan-Hellenic Union of Priests, Orthodoxy may end up with "a celibate clergy, as in the Catholic heresy." Very few women, says Fr. Kollas, want to marry priests, except for older women with no other marriage prospects. He attributes this to the fact that priests must wear cassocks and are subject to "despotism" and "lack of accountability" on the part of the Orthodox hierarchy. Contemplating the possibility of a celibate clergy like that in "the Catholic heresy," Fr. Kollas declares, "God save the Orthodox Church from such a terrible fate."

■ The Catholic bishops of Canada have a reputation of leaning considerably more leftward than their counterparts to the South. In recent decades, Bishop Remi De Roo of Victoria, British Columbia, was often viewed as the avant garde of the episcopal avant garde on a wide range of progressively defined social justice issues. When he retired, his successor, Bishop Raymond Roussin, was in for some distinctly unpleasant surprises. He discovered, for instance, that Bishop De Roo had, without the necessary canonical approval and without even entering the deal on the books, committed the diocese to guaranteeing a $12 million mortgage on a scheme for raising Arabian horses. The diocese had already paid out $3.5 million in mortgage payments and lawyers' fees incurred by the project. Bishop Roussin was "astounded" by the discovery. "It was totally on the side. I couldn't believe it." Friends of Bishop De Roo say the fuss is part of a conservative effort to discredit the bishop and his progressive causes.

■ Fast on the heels of his *Ex-Friends* comes another book by Norman Podhoretz, *My Love Affair with America: The Cautionary Tale of a Cheerful Conservative* (Free Press), and it, too, is an entertaining and instructive read. Podhoretz, who for thirty-five years as Editor of *Commentary* redefined the meaning of feistiness, once again mines the rich lode of his life among the New York writers and thinkers who made up what he calls "The Family," but this time he reaches back to his childhood in Jewish Brooklyn and forward to the present in composing what is nothing less than a hymn of gratitude that might well bear the title "Only in America." He is duly contrite about his lapse into sundry radicalisms in the 1960s. The cure came with the recognition that the radicalism of the Left flagrantly and systematically transgressed against a love affair with America that had possessed him from his earliest boyhood. Less persuasive than he wants it to be (and he knows that we disagree on this) is his claim that in recent years he has had to take up the cudgels against what he calls the anti-Americanism of the right. In this connection he recounts his reaction, and that of some others, to the 1996 symposium in these pages on the judicial usurpation of politics, and also to William Bennett's doleful reading of the American character during the Clinton impeachment proceedings. He suggests that he and I have since tempered our positions, which is reassuring since I hope never to be Norman Podhoretz's ex-friend. And he was pleased with my extended discussion taking issue with Bennett on what the impeachment events told us about the American people ("Bill Clinton and the American Character," June/July 1999). In fact, there was

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nothing "anti-American" about either our symposium on the judiciary or Bill Bennett's analysis of the American soul. Holding America accountable to its constituting truths (as in "We hold these truths . . .") is a very American thing to do, even if, as Podhoretz correctly notes, some people who really are anti-American have claimed to be doing only that. The grave and unchecked abuse of the polity—as in the judicial usurpation of politics—necessarily raises questions about the legitimacy of the government. The American experiment began with the question of legitimate government and will flourish only so long as that question continues to be pressed. But *My Love Affair* is really not a contentious book. The author is chiefly bearing witness to blessings received. Especially insightful is his discussion of the way in which being Jewish in America has been changed from a disability to an advantage, making America—Podhoretz's undoubted devotion to Israel notwithstanding—truly home for American Jews. Although there is plenty of cheer, a better subtitle might be "the cautionary tale of a *grateful* conservative." It is a book for which to be grateful.

■ A medical doctor writes to take exception to a comment here on the changing positions of the American Psychiatric Association and American Psychological Association on homosexuality. "Please realize that *not* designating homosexuality and pedophilia and adultery and murder as mental disorders is the *right* thing to do. They are wrongful acts, sins. . . . They are not diseases and should not be put in categories that even suggest disease ('mental disorders')." There is something attractive about that argument. The changes in question can be viewed as a move away from what Philip Rieff calls "the therapeutic society" in which clinical judgment subsumes and finally dissolves moral judgment. However, the regrettable fact, as noted in my comment, is that the two APAs are in the business of expanding, not contracting, the list of what counts as mental disorder—except for homosexuality, where the clear purpose is to remove any "stigma" surrounding homosexual activity and thus to "normalize" it. The Psychological Association is the more overt in its advocacy. Here, for instance, is a four-page brochure it has issued, "Answers to Your Questions About Sexual Orientation and Homosexuality." On every question—whether there is a choice factor in homosexuality, whether sexual orientation can be changed by therapy, whether gays and lesbians are good parents, etc.—the document toes the line of the gay advocacy organizations. It includes the notation, "This brochure was created with editorial assistance from the APA Committee on Lesbian, Gay, and Bisexual Concerns," and for further information it directs the reader to the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force. One may agree or disagree with the position championed by the American Psychological Association, but do we really need to argue about what it is up to?

■ It is a matter of class warfare after all. The *New York Times* reports that an evangelical minister in Staten Island rented two billboards to display this passage from Leviticus: "Thou shalt not lie with mankind as with womankind: It is an abomination." There was an enormous uproar by gay activists and politicians, and the next day the billboards were covered over. On the facing page in the *Times* was a story, with pictures, of a new exhibit at the Whitney Museum by the German artist Hans Haacke. The exhibit, which includes speakers broadcasting the sound of marching jackboots, depicts Mayor Rudolph Giuliani as a Nazi for his criticism of the elephant-dunged Madonna at the Brooklyn Museum. One need not approve of the Staten Island billboards to note that quoting the Bible is censored while comparing the mayor with Hitler is not. Censorship is not for the rich and fashionable.

■ Among the encouraging things about Emmaus Ministries in Chicago, as noted by Francis Cardinal George in his recommendation of the work, is that it gives concrete expression to the hope of "Evangelicals and Catholics Together" that, as stated in the original 1992 statement, "our unity in the love of Christ will become ever more evident as a sign to the world of God's reconciling power." The particular apostolate of Emmaus is "to make Jesus known on the streets among men involved in sexual exploitation in Chicago's night community." Supported by hundreds of volunteers and thirty Catholic and evangelical churches, Emmaus reflects the life-transforming possibilities that hold out hope to the truly marginal. For information: Emmaus Ministries, 921 West Wilson Avenue, Chicago, Illinois 60640.

■ It is not true that the promotion of fraudulent reports on the sexual misconduct of Catholic priests—such as the meretricious claims of the *Kansas City Star* (While We're At It, April)—is motivated only by anti-Catholicism. For many years now, "progressive" Catholics have seized upon every such report as fuel for their advocacy of married clergy and women priests. For instance, Paul Wilkes, editor of the *Tablet*, uncritically embraces the accuracy of the Kansas City report and is off and running: "Yet the key question—celibacy itself—will

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not go away, and the answer appears simple. Mandatory celibacy, for all priests, whether secular or religious, is not working." Never mentioned in such advocacy is that sexual misconduct among married Protestant clergy is at least as prevalent. Nor is attention paid the phenomenon increasingly attending marriage in our culture, namely, divorce. We do not hear much about the way in which, in recent decades, clergy divorce has, willy-nilly, been "normalized" in most Protestant churches. But then, you already knew that.

■ The Church's social doctrine was the subject of a recent conference at Catholic University in Washington. In responding to a paper, Father Michael Baxter, a puckishly likable "radical" who teaches at Notre Dame, opined that books such as *The Naked Public Square* and *The Catholic Moment* represented the continuation of a long delusion that Catholic political power can fix what is wrong with the country. This, he complained, ignores the hard tasks of Christian formation and discipleship. The author of the books in question, who gave the keynote address at the conference, was only slightly amused by this novel interpretation of his argument. Fr. Baxter went on to propose "seven symbolic steps" that might make Catholic social doctrine more credible. He said that Catholic colleges and universities should immediately and unequivocally forgive all student debts. The graduate students who were present thought this a very good idea. The proposal might have the merit of reducing the number of those troubling colleges and universities. Another proposal was that only those should be permitted to speak on social doctrine who could name three people on welfare. Fr. Baxter did not say whether it would count if one could name three poor people who had managed to get off welfare or were never on welfare to begin with. I gather it has something to do with the epistemological privilege of dependency. He further proposed, with special reference to Los Angeles, that 10 percent of moneys spent on building cathedrals should be given to the poor. I don't know why he limited himself to 10 percent. As one recalls from the precious ointment incident, Judas Iscariot had a much more sweeping proposal with respect to the expenditure of money on extravagant gestures. Then there is the factor that Baxter's proposal, based on a zero-sum notion of economics, raises the awkward question of soliciting donations for building cathedrals under false pretenses. More importantly, Fr. Baxter fails to appreciate that the poor in particular may be in need of cathedrals. I did like one of his symbolic steps, however: that the bishops should move their national headquarters out of Washington in order to distance themselves from the power-lust and policy wonkery that dominates life inside the beltway. That step, Fr. Baxter's misunderstanding notwithstanding, would be thoroughly in line with the argument of the books he so dislikes.

■ After the death of the evil empire, there were hopes for reconciliation between the two Russian Orthodox Churches, the Church Outside of Russia (ROCOR) and the Moscow Patriarchate. Unfortunately, conflicts have continued, not least over properties in the Holy Land. Patriarch Alexis of Moscow has been playing footsy with, among others, Palestine's Yassir Arafat to claim properties that have long been administered by ROCOR. In protest against such a seizure in Jericho, Sister Maria Stephanopoulos staged a sit-in, which gained a measure of publicity in the area since her brother is George Stephanopoulos, former top aide to President Clinton who is now with ABC television. It is a relatively small incident in the much larger and very sad story of a Moscow Patriarchate, deeply corrupted by seventy years of Soviet domination, that has been disappointing hopes for reconciliation with just about everyone, including, not least of all, the Patriarch of the West, the Bishop of Rome.

■ An incisive comment on the Whitney Museum's featuring an exhibit that compares Mayor Giuliani with the Nazis (Giuliani thought the dunged Madonna at the Brooklyn Museum was blasphemous and threatened to cut off funds, just like Hitler) is offered by Richard Brookhiser: "Hans Haacke, the German artist who started the Giuliani-Nazi fuss, claims Brecht as his inspiration. But the choice of black or red was a coin flip in prewar Germany: Brecht the Communist came from the same demimonde, half artsy, half thuggish, as the Nazis. Contemporary art claims, when pressed, a spirit of criticism or irony that (apart from crude braying at defeated enemies) was certainly foreign to the Nazis. Yet what is irony but nihilism's little brother? In Stage 1, you make values in a valueless world; in Stage 2, you play tricks on the world. Both are riffs on a common insight. Are Nazis and artists eternal enemies or secret sharers? The answer is, they're both; mostly the former, but a little bit of the latter. If artists could define, and hence delimit, their kinship, it would no longer disturb them. Since it festers, unacknowledged, all they can do is stick their tongues out at Rudy Giuliani."

■ We haven't heard much lately about the Common Ground initiative that Cardinal Bernardin of

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Chicago helped to launch shortly before his death, but I am told it is still going. Whatever the good intentions of those involved, it was and is a project that redefines the center leftward. I noticed the other day that on Third Avenue there is a new coffee bar. It is named Uncommon Grounds. That, in the singular, might suggest a better place for Christians to take their stand.

■ In the late nineteenth century, the "good government movement" got itself stuck with the label of the goo-goo movement. Of course there was much that needed reform in corrupt political machines, as there is much that needs reform today. But inveterate reformers have a way of coming up with proposals that counter not just aberrant human nature but human nature itself. A proposal for reform isn't much good if it depends upon a prior remaking of the human condition, and is even worse if it assumes the remaking of people for the worse. Today's paper provides two dreadfully earnest goo-goo proposals. First there is Al Gore's "campaign finance reform" that would have corporations, unions, and individuals put their billions of dollars into a neutral campaign "endowment fund," from which politicians of all stripes would draw. But why would a supporter of Jesse Helms want to help fund the reelection of Teddy Kennedy, or vice versa? This is goo-goo silliness of a high order. It is premised upon the notion that "interests" in politics is a vice. The fact is that every interest is a "special interest," including those interests that claim to be advancing only their special version of the common good. Mr. Gore seems to believe that funding politicians should be motivated by the altruism of disinterested good citizens. One might more plausibly contend that the common good would be served by the defunding of politicians, except that democratic politics is the competition of interests (including moral causes) that are, supporters hope, advanced by candidates who need to be financed. It is elementary, but it seems not to be understood by a cagey politician who has a long track record of carefully calibrating political influence in exchange for money. Between Buddhist monks and goo-goo airheadedness, it is hard to know which reflects more poorly on his judgment. The second item in today's paper is the report by the Pentagon's inspector general that "anti-gay attitudes are common and to some extent even tolerated" in the military. The distinguished military sociologist Charles Moskos observes: "There is a serious question in the findings of the survey on gays in the military. How is it that 20 percent of the military respondents said they had not heard offensive remarks or jokes about gays? Either they are lying or, even more troubling, completely oblivious to their fellow service members. It would even be hard to believe that one in five civilians has not heard a derogatory remark about homosexuals." The military is composed mainly of young men in life's season of sexual fever, and we are to suppose that it is possible and desirable that they not tell jokes about sex. Or that, anomaly being an essential ingredient of humor, they not tell jokes about anomalous sexual behavior, which for about 99 percent of them includes homosexuality. And no, it is not at all like telling racist jokes. Sex, unlike racism, is both universal and good, and humor is one God-given way of coping with the problems that attend it. The problem with the thinking of the inspector general and the Vice President, as with all goo-gooism, is that it proposes not government by the consent of the governed but government by the replacement of the governed. As despots both benign and otherwise have complained from time immemorial: the people are not worthy of our government. The happiest solution is for such rulers to find a different, and presumably better, class of people to govern. In that quest, we who are the people may wish them luck.

■ That indomitable civil libertarian, jazz maven, columnist, and champion of the unborn, Nat Hentoff, asked Ken Burns, director and coproducer of the PBS documentary *Not for Ourselves Alone: The Story of Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Susan B. Anthony*, why the film excluded any reference to what those founding feminists said about abortion. Didn't Mr. Burns, who earlier received just acclaim for his documentary on the Civil War, know their position? "Yes," Mr. Burns unhesitatingly replied, but he did not want the documentary "burdened by present and past differing views on choice." Ah yes, the burden of truth. "Susan B. Anthony on abortion: 'The woman is awfully guilty who commits the deed. It will burden her conscience in life. It will burden her soul in death.' Elizabeth Cady Stanton: 'When we consider that women are treated as property, it is degrading that we should treat our children as property to be disposed of as we see fit. There must be a remedy even for such crying evil as this [abortion]. But where shall it be found? At least, where begin, if not in the complete enfranchisement and elevation of women?" Were Anthony and Stanton still with us, opines Mr. Hentoff, "I think they would have picketed the showing of *Not for Ourselves Alone*."

■ "Journalistic ethics" becomes ever more ludicrously oxymoronic. Here is a four-thousand-

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word screed by John Cornwell, author of the thoroughly discredited book on Pius XII, *Hitler's Pope*, accompanied by a big picture spread and published in London's *Sunday Times*. The title is "Heaven Can't Wait" and the message is that Pope John Paul II, almost totally disabled, is being manipulated by sinister "right wing" forces in the Vatican. There are thirty uses of "conservative," "right wing," and "reactionary" up to the point where I stopped counting. Cornwell reports, "Reliable sources in the Vatican indicate that he is no longer managing important church business and that he spends much of the day resting. One Vatican-based cardinal reports that the Pope is invariably in bed by 6 P.M." Of course no sources are named. Over the years and in recent months, I have spent many hours with the Pope, during the day and over meals in evenings. I know, and I know many who know more intimately, his daily routine, and it would be exhausting for a person twenty years younger than he is. John Cornwell is simply lying. Of course there is nothing new in this, nor is Cornwell alone. The papal death watch has been in continuous session for at least fifteen years. Of course the Pope is getting older and one day he will die. At which point the vultures will no doubt gleefully declare that they told us so. "The progress of his illness," writes Cornwell, "has coincided with a host of global crises within the Catholic Church: a dramatic fall in vocations to the priesthood throughout the world, accompanied by papal intransigence on the issue of married or women priests," and so forth. In fact, in recent years there has been a dramatic increase in the number of priestly vocations throughout the world. And "papal intransigence" on married or women priests is just another way of saying that John Cornwell disagrees with the Pope. So if there is nothing new in such prevarication, why do I mention it? Because there is a particularly revealing moment in Cornwell's diatribe that helps us understand how he and other journalistic *Vaticanisti* get their "information." "My informant, whom I dub Monsignor Sotto Voce (Deep Throat), has aged since he first began plying me, thirteen years ago, with unattributable indiscretions over his favorite dishes: double-egged fettucine, roast suckling pig, two bottles of Villa Antinori, and a glass or two of chilled prosecco 'to clear the head.'" This half-drunk, embittered monsignor, "his pursed lips withered with petulance and the permanent indignation of slighted worth," revealed to Cornwell that "the Vatican is a palace of gossipy eunuchs. The whole place floats on a sea of bitchery." Presumably Mr. Cornwell got this scoop as he listened with journalistic professionalism over his abstemious green salad and designer water. I don't doubt that there are such disgruntled monsignori in the Vatican, or that an unscrupulous reporter plying them with food and drink can get them to say some nasty things about their superiors. But that such journalistic malfeasance (if there is still a standard by which to define malfeasance) should get Mr. Cornwell a six-page spread in the *Sunday Times* is, I confess, more than a little disappointing.

■ The Oregon Province of the Society of Jesus writes to assure us that the new school being launched in Portland (see While We're At It, March) will not be taking children away from their parents all day and all year. "One of the conditions for acceptance into Nativity School is family participation. We hope our efforts will bind [families] closer together." I commented on the basis of a press report and welcome the reassurance.

■ An eruv, as interreligiously astute readers know, is a device for demarcating the area within which observant Jews may travel on the sabbath. It is usually no more than a thin colored cord strung high on trees or posts where it would be noticed only by those who were looking for it. Wherever around the country there are a significant number of Orthodox Jews you are likely to find an eruv. But some citizens in Palo Alto, California, objected that erecting an eruv would be an unconstitutional violation of, you guessed it, the separation of church and state. The *Palo Alto Weekly* supports the eruv, noting that it would be "virtually unnoticeable, would incur no cost to the city" and would be a "harmless" way to demonstrate "the community's diversity and tolerance." We agree with the editors, of course, although one wishes they came up with some less trivializing reasons for defending the free exercise of religion. The ACLU and Americans United for Separation of Church and State, however, are worried about the eruv touching public property, although "both organizations allow that an eruv may be permissible if all other groups are given the same freedoms in the future." For some reason, only Orthodox Jews have asked for an eruv to date, but all the other religious groups in Palo Alto support them. What really alarms the ACLU and Americans United is that the city would have to issue a paper granting, in return for one dollar, the right of the eruv organization to put up its marker on public property. Says Martin Kassman of the Bay Area Americans United chapter, "For the government to declare this eruv to be in effect is for the government to make a religious act." The objection is no doubt based on the venerable constitutional principle that to acknowledge religion is to establish religion. As

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Barry Goldwater did not say, extremism in the defense of freedom from religion is no vice.

■ I see the *New Oxford Review* (*NOR*) is taking on, of all people, Hans Urs von Balthasar, accusing him of being an Hegelian relativist who "smuggles into the heart of the Catholic a serious doubt about the truth of the Catholic faith." The author, Father Regis Scanlon, is especially exercised by Balthasar's argument that we may dare to *hope* that, in the infinite mercy of God, all will finally be saved. This is a subject that I address in some detail in my new book, *Death on a Friday Afternoon*, and I propose, contra the *NOR* article, that the matter is not settled by the words of Jesus about Judas Iscariot. In making his case that we know for certain that some or many will be eternally damned, Fr. Scanlon cites several Catholic authorities, including John Paul II. Conveniently enough, he does not cite the Pope's discussion of this question in his book of personal reflections, *Crossing the Threshold of Hope*. John Paul writes: "But the problem remains. Can God, who has loved man so much, permit the man who rejects Him to be condemned to eternal torment? And yet, the words of Christ are unequivocal. In Matthew's Gospel he speaks clearly of those who will go to eternal punishment (Matthew 25:6). Who will these be? The Church has never made any pronouncement in this regard. This is a mystery, truly inscrutable, which embraces the holiness of God and the conscience of man. The silence of the Church is, therefore, the only appropriate position for Christian faith. Even when Jesus says of Judas, the traitor, 'It would be better for that man if he had never been born,' his words do not allude for certain to eternal damnation." With such questions we come to the outer reaches of human understanding. They fall into the realm of what are called *theologoumena*, legitimate subjects of speculation and opinion rather than doctrine, never mind dogma. Fr. Scanlon seems to be suspicious of Balthasar and his "inflated reputation" because he is admired by liberal thinkers as well as by conservatives. The same can be said of Paul, Augustine, and Thomas Aquinas. Balthasar was held in highest esteem by Cardinal Ratzinger, and, shortly before his death in 1988, the Pope announced that he would be made a cardinal. I don't know what *NOR* is up to by attacking Balthasar. Whether one can be more orthodox than the Magisterium is doubtful. Why one would want to be is puzzling.

■ A Baptist pastor writes on his church stationery that bears the assertion, "We do the impossible." *Which put me in mind of the following that I ran* across somewhere: "They showed him the thing that couldn't be done, / And with a smile he went right to it. / He tackled that thing that couldn't be done. / And found out he couldn't do it."

■ From time to time, but not very often, a work is published that by its very existence makes the world a richer place. Such is *Beowulf* in a new verse translation by Seamus Heaney (Farrar, Straus). I am told that it is no longer the case, but for those of a certain age the assigned struggle with *Beowulf*, usually in transliteration from the Anglo-Saxon, was a required rite of passage in which the law of delayed gratification worked overtime. Fortunate, then, are the high school and college students who will have this bilingual edition that resoundingly vindicates the high but previously implausible praise that scholars have heaped upon this millennium-old narrative that undergirds the glory of English literature. Some critics have abused Heaney's translation for being unadorned and even flat, but I believe that is to miss the point. It is plain and straightforward, as is the tale, in relating the conflict of good and evil, courage and cowardice, in lives lived against the horizon of mortality and attuned to the hope of honor. A word of advice, however: it is to be read aloud, preferably with someone who has an ear for language and a heart for moral truth.

■ We are in the process of making major improvements to our website—www.FirstThings.com. We should be ready to unveil it sometime later this summer, but in the meantime our web developer suggested that we contact our readers about a particular feature we want to offer. It seems that, as with all things one enjoys, FIRST THINGS readers want to talk about the journal with others. So much so that we routinely are asked to set up what is called a "chat room" on our website, a "space" where cybercitizens can "congregate" and "talk" in "real time." (See how easily technology encourages the use of postmodernist distancing quotation marks?) People tell us that it would be a mistake for us actually to sponsor a chat room, because it requires a certain amount of vigilance to prevent the rude and obscene from souring the whole experience. So, trusting in the invisible hand and the energies of our readers, we have worked out the following compromise: we will not sponsor any chat rooms, e-mail listserves, or local discussion groups that concern FT or related issues. We will, however, devote a part of our website to the promotion of all such venues that others wish to establish regarding FIRST THINGS, the issues discussed therein, and the goals of the Institute on

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Religion and Public Life. If the Detroit Area FIRST THINGS weekly discussion group wishes to announce its schedule on the web, send us the contact information and we will post it. If the FIRST THINGS for Dummies listserve wants to set up an e-mail list that prohibits anyone with a Ph.D. from joining, that's okay, just give us the information on how to join and we will post it. We intend our "FT Discussions" page to be self-monitoring—if a particular group becomes defunct we'll take it off, but otherwise we'll let civil society police itself. After a few months, we'll make any policy changes we need to make, but we think this arrangement is the best way to satisfy those whose appetite for FIRST THINGS is not sated by a mere ten issues a year. (If you want your venue to be a charter member of FT Discussions, send an e-mail with your name, e-mail address, phone number, street address, and the name of the discussion venue, its location, and a brief description to Discussions@FirstThings.com.)

■ Of the many letters received, among the more gratifying are those of people, especially young people, returning to the faith through their encounter with FT. Some of these testimonials may be just a little exaggerated. After all, the journal is not in the strictest sense of the term a means of grace. But with so much encouragement we are emboldened to think that it may be an instrument of higher purposes. We will be happy to send a sample issue of this journal to people you think are likely subscribers. Please send names and addresses to FIRST THINGS, 156 Fifth Avenue, Suite 400, New York, New York 10010 (or e-mail to subscriberservices@pma-inc.net). On the other hand, if they're ready to subscribe, call toll-free 1-800-783-4903.

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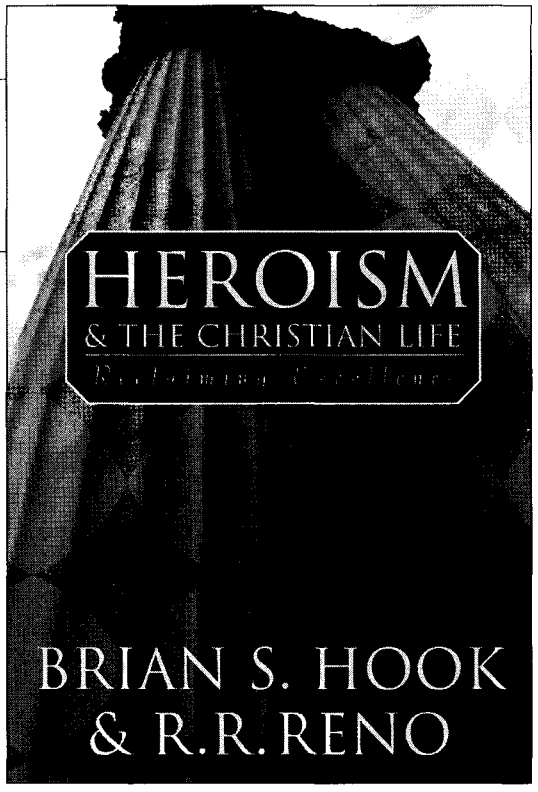

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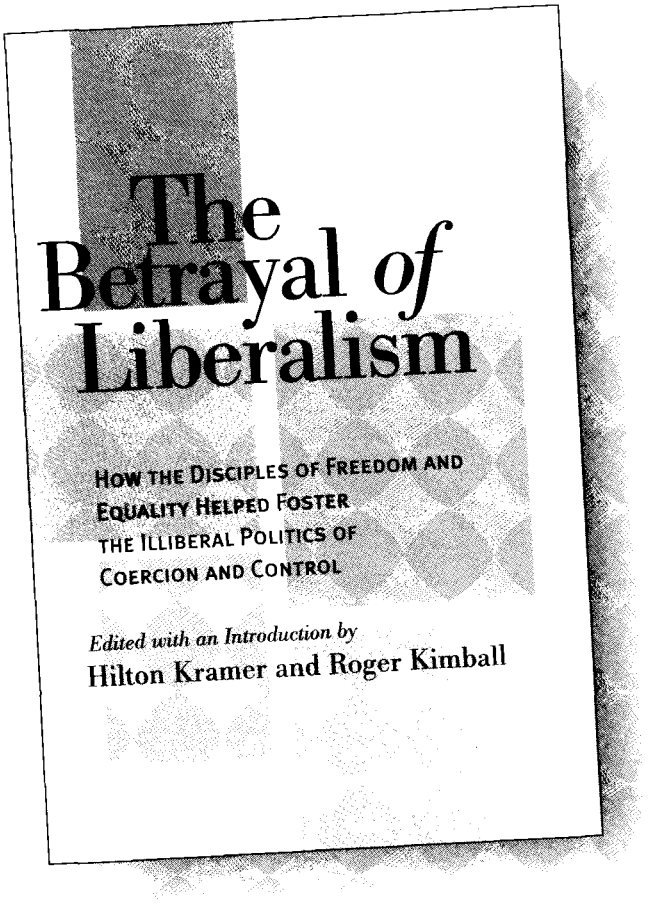
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